

Hafa Adai!

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# Saipan Tribune

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## COPE NORTH 2020

U.S. Air Force airmen assigned to the 909th Air Refueling Squadron, Kadena Air Base, Japan, prepare a KC-135 Stratotanker for take-off during Exercise Cope North 2020 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, last Feb. 13, 2020. Cope North enhances U.S. relationships with our regional allies and partners by demonstrating our resolve to promote security and stability throughout the Indo-Pacific.

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## DUE TO DRUG SMUGGLING CNMI Customs ramps up security efforts at ports

CNMI Customs director Jose C. Mafnas endorses passage of House Bill 21-104 that seeks to eliminate the 30-day grace period within which to pay the excise tax on goods that require Customs inspection and clearance. The House passed the bill last Wednesday. The bill now goes to the Senate for action.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

CNMI Customs Director Jose C. Mafnas disclosed that rampant drug smuggling has prompted the division to ratchet up security

efforts at all CNMI ports.

He declined to give further details about this, telling House of Representatives lawmakers during a session last week that he is not at liberty to disclose confidential

See DRUG on Page 4

## TO REVITALIZE ECONOMY AND END AUSTERITY Kilili to fed agencies: Get disaster relief funds 'out'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) vows to continue pushing federal agencies to get the



Sablan

hundreds of millions of dollars in disaster relief funds that they approved in Congress "out the door" to rebuild and revitalize the CNMI economy and end the need for austerity.

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* request for comments about the austerity measures recently implemented by the

administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Sablan said he pledged to Torres over the

See KILILI on Page 4

## Bill to suspend aviation fuel tax passes House

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The House of the Representatives unanimously passed last week House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao's (R-Saipan)

bill that seeks to suspend the payment of the aviation fuel tax during a state of significant emergency in the Commonwealth.

House Bill 21-102 will add a new subsection in the stat-

ute to indicate the suspension of aviation fuel tax during declared emergencies in the CNMI. The legislation's intent is to encourage airlines to continue servicing the CNMI.

With an 18-0 vote, the bill

now goes to the Senate for action. Reps. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) and Roman Benavente (R-Saipan) were absent during the session. Sablan earlier said the bill should not

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## INSIDE



### ASIA

Chinese authorities reported a slight uptick in new virus cases and 105 more deaths.

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### WORLD

Storm Dennis hammered Britain, bringing a month's worth of rain in just 48 hours.

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### OVERDRIVE

The Highlander set the pattern for a vehicle that now dominates the market: the crossover SUV.

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A LIFETIME OF SUNSETS

All legal residents of the Northern Marianas Islands including non-U.S. citizens are eligible to apply. Applicant households may be families or groups of unrelated individuals. Eligibility requirements are based on household size and income limits established by the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program.

## Local

### CPA to invest \$53K on Rota concession

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**  
kimberly\_bautista@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is insisting on investing \$53,000 from its own pockets on the Rota concession project.

During a CPA Financial Affairs Committee meeting last week, board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said that CPA is looking at investing the remaining \$53,000 needed for the expansion of the Rota International Airport and renovations to its terminal.



King-Hinds

The \$53,000 would go to the services of Ricondo & Associates to review the project to get the RFPs out in order to get the project started.

"We have engaged the services of Ricondo & Associates to review the concession plan for Rota and originally wasn't included in their scope of work to review the Rota International Airport and the additional scope is \$53,000," she said.

King-Hinds said that, al-

though times are hard for the economy and they have to cut back on expenses, Rota needs an economic break and if \$53,000 is all that stands between that, then it's a worthy investment.

"The people of Rota have been desperately seeking for some type of economic break and if it takes making further cuts so that they can have the \$53,000 to get the expertise that they need to be able to roll out this RFP so that the concessions can go out, then I think it's worth the investment," she said.

King-Hinds explained that there is some interest on Rota right now to enter into a public private partnership to expand and renovate the airport.

According to a previous article on the *Saipan Tribune*, Barrie C. Toves, who chairs the Airport Facilities Committee of CPA board, said that there are a couple of interested investors that are asking about the seaport and airport facilities on Rota.

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The University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability, the Micronesia Climate Change Alliance, and the UOG Green Army seek motivated youth ages 11 to 25 to participate in a first-time youth and young adults leadership program titled "Kulo': Emerging Climate Leaders."

In CHamoru, *kulo'* is the trumpet shell used to gather the community together for a purpose. The Kulo' cohort will work to amplify the call to climate action for their generation and throughout Micronesia, raising awareness and driving change.

The yearlong program will prepare youth to be leaders in the face of climate change based on their collective skills and interests. With support from CIS, MCCA, and the UOG Green Army, the Kulo' cohort will:

- learn about the causes and impacts of the climate crisis locally, regionally, and globally;

- root themselves in cultural values and indigenous wisdom to build island resilience;

- connect with relevant regional leaders, agencies, organizations, and stakeholders;

- create solutions to address the climate crisis; and

- develop an action plan to raise awareness and mobilize their island communities.

The program will launch with the Kulo': Emerging Climate Leaders Summit, a free three-day training embedded in the 11<sup>th</sup> UOG Conference on Island Sustainability from March 31 to April 2 with optional field trips and events on April 3. The conference is the region's main forum for researchers, government agencies, organizations, and community groups to promote sustainability in the broader areas of environment, economy, society, and education.

To apply for the Kulo': Emerging Climate Leaders program, visit [tinyurl.com/applykulo2020](https://tinyurl.com/applykulo2020). Applications are due on Feb. 29. Applicants under the age of 18 will be required to provide parent/guardian permission if selected.

For more information on the program, contact Lauren Swaddell at [swaddell@triton.uog.edu](mailto:swaddell@triton.uog.edu) or Moñeka De Oro at [micronesiaclimatetealliance@gmail.com](mailto:micronesiaclimatetealliance@gmail.com). For more information about the Conference on Island Sustainability, visit [www.uog.edu/cis2020](http://www.uog.edu/cis2020). (UOG)

## Pacific Rim objects to decision to submit certified questions

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA  
[kimberly\\_bautista@saipantribune.com](mailto:kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com)  
REPORTER

Pacific Rim Development Land Development, LLC filed its certified question proposal last week but it did so while maintaining its objection to submitting certified questions to the NMI Supreme Court.

Pacific Rim, through counsel Colin Thompson, said that, although Pacific Rim maintains its objection to the submission of certified questions, it proposes two questions on top of the U.S. District Court for the NMI's proposed questions.

The first certified question Thompson proposed was whether a notice of completion is valid if not filed with the Superior Court.

The second certified question was whether a notice of completion is ineffective for any purpose if delivery of the notice was made prior to substantial completion of the improvement, delivery of the materials, or the improvement has been actually abandoned.

Last Feb. 5, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona said that a certified question is necessary because of the difference between the state court and the CNMI's interpretation of state law matters, specifically the interpretation the CNMI's mechanic lien statute.

One of the questions Man-

glona proposes to submit to the NMI Supreme Court was whether the date of completion of a project refers to the date of completion of the entire project or the date of completion of the contracted work by a particular contractor.

The second proposed certified question was whether the notice of mutual termination constitutes a valid notice of completion, where the parties agreed that the contractor began its work and completed portions of the project and the owner agrees the contractor's obligation to the performed work under the construction contract are complete.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Pacific Rim filed an application for a mechanic's lien on IPI's hotel-casino project and on the land that it sits on.

A mechanic's lien refers to a security interest in the title to property for the benefit of those who have supplied labor or materials that improve the property.

Pacific Rim is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators for breach of contract (construction and promissory note), and unjust enrichment.

Thompson said the unpaid amount that is owed Pacific Rim is \$5.65 million, but it wants to collect from IPI approximately \$10 million in damages that would be proven at trial.

## Kulo' program seeks next generation of climate leaders



High school and college students presented sustainability-related research projects last July after a four-week fellowship program led by the University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability and UOG Sea Grant.

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# Mobil lease to expire soon

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**  
kimberly\_bautista@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

With Mobil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc.'s land lease of 40 years at the airport nearly expiring, the company has approached the Commonwealth Ports Authority over a year early with a proposal to extend its lease.

Last week, Mobil Oil Mariana Islands president Jimmy Tim Chau Hau presented their land lease extension proposal at the CPA Airport and Financial Affairs Committee meeting. Mobil's land lease agreement for the land near the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport is expir-

ing in May 2021.

"The presentation today was to present the lease, which is expiring in May 2021 and what we want to do is just highlight that to the board for the board to decide on the appropriate actions they need to take," he said.

Hau explained that Mobil wants to extend its lease in order to continue operating their business with the aviation industry.

"We sort of have a big presence in the CNMI and we want to participate in the growth of the CNMI but to do that we need to continue to do all the various businesses and aviation is one of our main businesses," he said.

Hau said that they presented their extension proposal early to give CPA ample time to decide on their proposal and so that operations are not interrupted.

"We wanted to highlight this to the board early so there is no interruption to the business of aviation and the airlines, which is very important to Saipan. That's sort of why we're setting out early, so that the appropriate measures can be taken, so there's a smooth transition," he said.

Hau also mentioned that Mobil is also having its own struggles as a result of the novel coronavirus outbreak.



## DAVID VS GOLIATH

Julian Biscocho from San Vicente Elementary School tries to push Kyo-kutaisei Takuya out of the sumo circle at the sumo wrestling exhibition held last Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.

BEA CABRERA



Saipan children having a good experience of what a sumo wrestler's life is like at the sumo wrestling exhibit held Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.

BEA CABRERA

## DRUG

From Page 1

information.

"I want to reiterate that Customs continues to face a lot of challenges with drug smuggling, undervaluation of goods, undeclared high tax-rate commodities, and other contrabands like fake products, and banned hazardous chemicals," he said in his testimony endorsing House Bill 21-104.

Authored by floor leader Rep. John Paul Sablan (Rep.-Saipan), H.B. 21-104 seeks to eliminate the 30-day grace period within which to pay the excise tax on goods that require Customs inspection and clearance. The House passed the bill on a 12-5 vote during last Wednesday's session.

Mafnas assured lawmakers that this bill will lessen Customs' challenges.

Mafnas pointed out that importers have a lot of time to prepare their payment for their imported goods before they arrive. He said the ship-

ping time for the U.S. or Asia takes anywhere from 10 to 20 days.

"If the 'pay-upon-clearance' works with the other bigger Customs operations, I believe it can work here too," said Mafnas. He reiterated his earlier statement that CNMI Customs is the only member of the Oceania Customs Organization that offers a grace period for import tax.

Twenty-three countries are members of the OCO.

To address businesses' concerns about the legislation, Mafnas assured that Customs "is not in the business of closing a business." He said when an importer has a hard time paying its tax dues, Customs has a mechanism in place to work with them. Even without a grace period in place, Customs can work with an importer to release their cargo pending payment, he added. This courtesy, he said, is offered to low-risk importers who are compliant with customs laws.

Mafnas said they give incentives to importers/businesses that have a clean importing history—incentives

like "facilitating their goods without inspection at their site, installment payment arrangement when having a difficulty meeting their tax payment, and Customs will release goods to the low-risk importers pending their payment."

Sablan said in an earlier interview that many representatives of the business community gave a lot of input on the bill, which is why they put further amendments to address the concerns the businesses have. That includes giving

By taking into consideration the concerns of the business community, they put in a provision that they give the Customs director or his or her designee discretion to work with businesses on when to pay their import tax, especially in these very trying times.

He said when the businesses need more time to pay their taxes, they should appeal to the Customs director and explain the hardships.

"And that goes to any businesses," Sablan said.

"We hope that we will go over this bump soon. We think the bump will be temporary and things will improve thereafter. It's a global thing at the moment, and it's going affect the

whole economy and it affects business, the government, and everyone in the community so that sort of prevents the CNMI from striding and developing its businesses," he said.

## KILILI

From Page 1

weekend to continue to work to bring more money to the Commonwealth economy.

He cited the \$60 million in Medicaid money for this year, which was enacted last Dec. 20.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved two massive spending bills for fiscal year 2020 that included \$120 million for Marianas Medicaid over the next two years.

All of the insular areas received the two-year funding, but the Marianas received the largest percentage increase. Marianas Medicaid for fiscal year 2020 was previously set at just \$6.93 million for the year.

The delegate said Torres made the difficult decision to cut hours for government employees from the regular 80 hours to 64 under the austerity measures.

When asked whether the 64-hour cut is the best option to address the CNMI's financial situation, Sablan replied: "I do not have access to the information the governor has about the Commonwealth's financial situ-

ation. And it would be inappropriate for me, as our representative in U.S. Congress, to second-guess the governor on a matter of local governance."

He is hoping that Commonwealth employees who are paid 100% with federal funds do not lose hours.

Sablan said cutting hours for federally-funded workers would hurt those individuals and their families. "It would unnecessarily take money out of our economy when we need it most. And it could jeopardize the future continuation of those federal programs in the Marianas," he said.

The Torres-Palacios administration recently announced the implementation of a 64-hour work schedule of government employees starting on March 15, citing a \$48.38-million drop in revenue estimates for fiscal year 2020 due to the residual economic effects of Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018 and the substantial adverse impact of the coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Under Torres' directive 2020-002, business hours for departments and agencies under the Executive Branch will be closed during every Friday beginning March 20 until further notice.

## BILL

From Page 1

acted on as there's no impact analysis done, and no comments from the public and stakeholders.

In an interview last Friday, Attao said he is hoping that the Senate will act favorably on his bill.

As a result of the coronavirus outbreak that originated in Wuhan, China, four airlines have suspended flight to the CNMI.

"If you [deduct] the flights that are coming in, there's really nothing in collection for aviation tax," Attao said, adding that the intent of letting go of the aviation tax is to hopefully entice airlines to come in and take advantage of the zero tax on aviation fuel. "Hopefully [we] get the people on the ground, people into restaurants, people into hotels, people into stores," he said.

Revenue from the aviation fuel tax was about \$630,000 from the last fiscal year.

He stressed that the CNMI's No. 1 priority is to take care of the people and make sure that the coronavirus would not enter the CNMI. That being said, Attao said the CNMI needs tourists from destinations that are not affected by the coronavirus, in order to get some economic activity going and cushion this damage from the virus' impact.

The speaker said health is the No. 1 priority, but they also have to understand that, as members of the Legislature, they need to find other avenues to make sure that revenues are coming in, economic activity is sustainable, and they're able to get collections into the coffers.

"Get some good activity going around—that's the gist behind the

legislation," Attao said.

Reps. Joel C. Camacho (R-Saipan), Luis John DLG Castro (R-Saipan), Marco T. Peter (R-Saipan), John P. Sablan (R-Saipan), and Ralph N. Yumul (R-Saipan) are co-authors of the legislation.

The proposed subsection states that during a period of a declaration of significant emergency affecting air travel to the Commonwealth, and 60 days thereafter, the amount of aviation fuel tax imposed by the statute shall be excluded in the price of aviation fuel sold to international air carriers.

The seller of aviation fuel may apply to the Finance secretary for a tax credit for the amount of the aviation fuel tax excluded from the price of aviation fuel sold to international carriers during the period of the declaration of significant emergency and 60 days after.

While seeing it prudent to protect the health and welfare of the people living and visiting the CNMI, Attao said the request to suspend the arrivals of travelers from mainland China will have an adverse financial effect on the airlines and, in turn, negatively affect the CNMI's economy.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres recently declared a significant state of emergency to address the medical issues associated with the coronavirus outbreak and the potential medical threat to the CNMI.

Attao said just as Torres took steps to address the urgent medical issues, his legislation endeavors to mitigate the economic ramifications to travel industry partners and the CNMI.

The speaker said a fuel tax suspension should serve as an incentive for air carriers and mitigate the economic effects resulting from the emergency by reducing the costs of airlines.





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# Saipan Submarine offers more seats for residents

By JUSTINE NAUTA  
justine\_nauta@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

With the COVID-2019 out-

break causing a sudden decrease in the number of tourists in the CNMI, that has opened up many seats aboard

the Saipan Submarine under Saipan Tours. The company sees that as the perfect opportunity to offer more seats

to CNMI residents who may want to explore the underwater wonders of the Saipan Lagoon.

According to the tour supervisor Ron Wright, since tourists are Saipan Tours' main clients, most of their passengers are tourists and not enough numbers of residents are taking the underwater trip. Now, with the sudden drop of tourists and many open seats, this is an excellent time to take advantage and join the crew on their route.

"We're trying to come up with a price that works not for only us but also for the schools and the residents," said Wright. In a recent event, Agape Christian School took advantage of the special promotion that was offered which was \$15 per student and teachers were free.

Wright stated that the promotion for the schools is actually a two-day event, which includes a lesson plan that focuses on not only the submarine but also about the water and the fish on the first day. The next day is when the students and teachers will be able to see what was presented.

The crew doesn't only accommodate their guest, but also the ocean itself. Wright stated that as they go through their route, if they see trash or something that doesn't belong in the water, they would take a separate boat and dive into

the ocean to collect the things that aren't supposed to be in the water.

Wright has been in the tourism industry for 20 years and has been with Saipan Submarine for three years. The biggest significant change he has seen is that the pilot, Stanley Aldan, and his crew, have started serving families. Before, they would just get tourists into the boat, not knowing if they were separated from their family or not, and then start the trip. Now, the whole crew puts more thought into not separating families and making sure that families are seated together.

Aldan has been the pilot of the submarine for 11 years and is considered a veteran. One of his earliest memories of being a pilot is seeing a rare 400-lb African pompano. Aldan says that the submarine tour is the best experience for mostly younger children and people who don't know how to swim but want to see fish and other sea animals.

The Saipan Submarine has already started on their school promotion and they're currently working on special promotions for larger companies and first responders and their families.

For more information, call (670) 322-7746.

## Agape students learn more about marine biology in submarine trip

By JUSTINE NAUTA  
justine\_nauta@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Students of Agape Christian School took advantage of the President's Day holiday to learn more about marine biology last Feb. 17 in a trip aboard the Saipan Submarine.

In total, 130 students and 20 parents/chaperones took part in the underwater tour of the Saipan Lagoon.

According to the Agape school pastor, Kok H. Pang, the students and parents who took part in this astonishing experience were very excited

and very happy, especially since they were in a submarine and could see the fish and other sea animals up close.

There was also a voiceover inside the submarine that told all guests about what's coming up, which provided a lot of information for the students to

become more aware of what's under the ocean.

The group was able to witness many schools of fish, three turtles, and one blacktip baby shark.

Pang also pointed out that it's important that the students not only learn about studying and getting high grades so that they can go to a great school, but that it's important to also know how to be a good person.

"It's important to explore the world that God created and to be a blessing to other people and most especially the environment," he added.

Pang, who moved with his family from Singapore to Saipan as missionaries, said they enjoy the beaches, the weather, and the clean air of the CNMI, so it's important that the students learn how to preserve these things on the islands.

"We don't have a zoo but we have the sea, and we hope there will be more to offer for the students who are interested in marine engineering, marine science, and other fields, to learn more about that particular field," said Pang.



JUSTINE NAUTA

Students and parents of Agape Christian School embark on the ferry that will take them to the Saipan Submarine that is anchored between Saipan and Managaha, last Feb. 17.



JUSTINE NAUTA

A crew member of the Saipan Submarine under Saipan Tours helps students into the submarine that is anchored in the middle of Saipan and Managaha.



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# Lee Pan: Spare some govt employees from work hour cut

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Rep. Joseph "Lee Pan" Guerrero (R-Saipan) believes that cutting work hours as part of the austerity regime should be done from the top and that low-wage employees should be spared.

In an interview last week, Guerrero said the first thing that the Torres administration needs to ascertain is the employees' salary and he feels that those making \$18,000 to \$20,000 per annum need to be spared from the cuts.

"It's not right if we cut them as well and they can't be able to meet their financial obligations," Guerrero said.

The administration earlier said that the decision to implement the 64-hour work schedule is based on an estimated revenue loss of \$48.3 million, blamed on the coronavirus outbreak.

Guerrero said Gov. Ralph

DLG Torres should look at his Cabinet in implementing austerity measures. "In fairness, you start from the top, not from the bottom. If a cut has to be done, it has to be done from the top.

How can you cut somebody in the bottom when they're suffering [already]? ...It's not fair," he said.

Guerrero said they have implemented cost-cutting measures at the Legislature as well.

He said both Senate and the House of Representatives must continue with their sessions, regardless of funding issues, because it is vitally important that they introduce and pass legislations that would improve the coffers of the CNMI.

"That's very important right now. We need to be mindful of what we can do," he said.

Guerrero said one thing that



Guerrero

they have placed on the table for discussions is the sin tax for cigarette, beer, and liquor. He pointed out that, even with the sin tax and the increased prices, people would still buy these items. He cited the case of cigarettes, in which a pack is almost \$10 apiece, yet people continue buying it.

"The same thing with liquor. These are something that we're exploring to see and come up with new revenue,"

Guerrero said.

The lawmaker said if they don't come up with new revenue generating legislation, the CNMI's economy would continue to go down because of the coronavirus outbreak.

With respect to the House members' closed door meeting last Monday with Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig, Guerrero said it was done to clarify the definite percentage of the cuts at the Legislature.

He said that, according to Atalig, it's 28.3%, but what they are seeing from the Office of Management and Bud-

get is totally different.

"OMB is showing us 56[%%]. It's [higher]. I don't know how they quantify their numbers. But when you have two conflicting figures from Finance and OMB...which one do we follow?" Guerrero said.

He said that, according to Atalig, his 28.3% is justified but not the 56%.

Guerrero said they asked Atalig whether he is aware of the submission from OMB regarding the budget reduction that was submitted to the Legislature and a copy was provided to Atalig's of-

fice, the governor, and the lieutenant governor.

"That was what the meeting was all about—clarification on what is the proportionate cuts for the Legislature," he said.

Guerrero said they need to know because they have to adjust their office's operation. "Do we need to reduce the employees' salaries? Or do we need to let go of some employees? Because absent adequate funding, the operations of our office cannot continue," he said.

Guerrero said the Legislative Bureau is now looking into their budget numbers to make sure that the bureau is not hampered in terms of operation.

## Mendoza is new Bayani Association president

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**  
justine\_nauta@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Bayani Association has elected Leonila Mendoza as its new president during their induction of new officers and board of directors at the Club C in Kanoa Resort in Susupe last Feb. 14.

Besides Mendoza, the new officers for 2020-2021 are Yolanda Deramon as vice president, Mario Mayuga as secretary, Anastacia Mercado as treasurer, Ladyvir Canape as auditor, Alma Hilaria as press relations officer, and the marshals, who have the role as a sergeant-at-arms who calls meetings to order, are Samuel Justo, Teogenes Mendoza, Jaime Del Peralte, and Jojo Sotto.

The board of directors are made up of Fernando Enano, Nelida Atalig, Marie Meister, Lolita Velasco, Ronald de Ramos, Mayuga, Canape, and Mendoza.

The induction ceremony was hosted by Anna-mae Adaza.

In her acceptance speech, Mendoza said she was initially hesitant about accepting the role of leading the association but was convinced to do so after all members assured her of their support.

United Filipino Organizations president Marcelo Masilungan, who was also present at the induction, later reminded the Bayani Association members to always support the organization and to continue giving back to the community. He also thanked the association for supporting the UFO.

The Bayani Organization will be having its annual re-

treat during Lent, where they will also be assisting the UFO in providing support services on Good Friday, April 10, 2020, on Mt. Tapochau.

Members of the Bayani Association occupy different occupations in the CNMI and include sales representatives, engineers, government employees, bakers, accountants, administrative assistant, maintenance, landscapers, warehouse workers, choreographers, and caregivers, to name a few.

To join the organization, contact Mendoza at 287-7563 or Mayuga at 285-1021.

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

**Annual MIFICPA tax seminar set**

The Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants will be hosting this year's tax seminar on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, from 8am to 12pm, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Registration starts at 7:30am. This seminar is open to all, including non-accountants.

The seminar will be conducted by David J. Burger, managing partner of Burger, Comer & Magliari.

As part of a new board resolution, all current members/new applicants shall be required to submit the following: filled up membership form; diploma/certification that you finished an accounting course; certificate of membership shall be issued upon request.

MIFICPA will be having a fundraising for the Taal Volcano victims by selling the the 25th Anniversary MIFICPA T-shirts and souvenir program for \$5 each until supplies last. Also, it will be placing a donation box during the seminar for those who would like to donate. It will later be turned over to the office of Philippine honorary consul to the CNMI Glicerio "Eli" Arago after the seminar.

For reservation and more details, details, email: Angie Mamaril (angiemamaril@yahoo.com); Noemi Catigan (noemi\_catigan@fiesta-

saipan.com); Deo Manese (djmanese@gmail.com); Paul Sanie (paulangelosanie@hotmail.com); Ronnel Calma (rzcalma@jzgroupinc.com); Jimaela Ham (jvham888@gmail.com); or Ana Hilario (ana.hilario@itechq.net) **(PR)**

**500 Sails offers free swim classes to women in February and March**

In partnership with Commonwealth Women's Association, 500 Sails is offering free swim classes for women and girls 12 and older through the Sirena Project. Below are the newly announced March dates, including two Fridays.

Saturdays this February and March 2020, plus on March 20 and March 27. All classes are from 10am to 11am at Guma Sakman; all levels welcome. Bring a water bottle, swim clothes, a towel, and a friend.

Formoreinformation: emailinfo@500sails.org, visit website at www.500sails.org, follow www.facebook.com/500SailsDolphinClubSaipan, or call Emma Perez at 670-285-4268. **(PR)**

**Teen poetry slam competition invites youth**

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Do-

mestic & Sexual Violence will be hosting Teen Poetry Slam 2020 on Feb. 28, starting at 6pm, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

This event is intended to raise awareness during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in February 2020 and is open to ages 13 to 19. To participate, sign up by Feb. 19, 2020.

Those ages 13-19 are invited to perform their original poetry. Those interested in competing must submit their poems and contact information for review to info@EndViolenceNMI.org before or by 11:59pm on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020.

Poem submissions must include the contestant's full name, age, name of school, and contact number(s). Submissions may be sent within the body of the email, as a Word document, or as a PDF to info@EndViolenceNMI.org. For more information, contact the Northern Marianas Coalition against Domestic & Sexual Violence at (670) 234-3878 or email info@EndViolenceNMI.org. **(PR)**


**E-File & Serve having technical glitches**

The CNMI Judiciary's electronic filing sys-


tem, E-File & Serve, is currently experiencing technical difficulties. Until further notice, all persons seeking to file and serve with either the Supreme Court or the Superior Court must file and serve in accordance with the Commonwealth Rules of Practice and the Commonwealth Rules for Electronic Filing and Service. For more information, contact the following individuals: Gretchen A. Smith, Clerk of Court, CNMI Supreme Court, at (670) 236-9715 or email gretchen.smith@nmijudiciary.com; or Patrick V. Diaz, Clerk of Court, CNMI Superior Court at (670) 235-5248 or email patrick.diaz@nmijudiciary.com. **(PR)**

**Kagman schools set PTSA meeting**

The February Parents Teachers Students Association meeting of the Kagman Unified Schools has been moved to Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2020. The venue is at the Kagman High School cafeteria starting at 5:30pm. All parents and guardians are being encouraged to attend this meeting. Child care will be provided. Call the any of the three schools at 237-3150 (KAGE), 237-3165 (COVMS), or 237-3196 (KHS) if you have any questions or concerns. **(PR)**



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNING AGENCY**  
Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center



Public Service Announcement – Availability of Criminal Justice Grants

The Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA) is announcing the availability of federal funds from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). These Grant Program include the Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA), the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant program and the Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG). A brief description and amounts available for each award under individual programs are listed below. Please visit our Office on Capitol Hill, building 1315 for a more detailed explanation on eligibility requirements, program purpose areas and the new application form. **All applicants must have a DUNS number and nonprofit agencies must have a 501 (c) (3) Federal Tax Exemption.**

**Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) FY2019: \$187,932.00**  
The Available funds can be implemented in the following purpose areas: Law Enforcement program, Prosecution and Court Programs, Prevention and Education programs, Corrections and community corrections programs, Drug treatment and enforcement programs. Planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs. Crime victim and witness program (other than compensation).

**Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Assistance Formula Program: FY2019: \$522,376.00**

- To comply with VOCA guidelines, funds made available through VOCA assistance program is intended for agencies that provide direct service to victims of crime. Funds under this program is designed to provide direct services to all victims of child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assaults.
- All applicants must show in their application how they will provide direct services to one or more of the crime victims mentioned above.
- New applicants must also show on their application that they have a history of providing direct services to crime victims and have other sources of funding to support the program to ensure continuity of services to victims.

**Amounts Available:**  
Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Child Abuse: \$462,376.00  
Underserved Crime Victims: \$60,000.00

**STOP Violence Against Women Act Formula Grant Program (VAWA) FY2019: \$556,987.00**  
STOP-VAWA grant programs provide assistance for victims through protection and services that they need to pursue safe and healthy lives, while simultaneously enabling communities to hold offenders accountable for their violence. In accordance with the STOP program requirements "CNMI Three Year Implementation Plan", STOP-VAWA grant funds are made available to support law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, and the Superior Court in the CNMI. Allotted agencies mentioned below, **must** submit a complete application of how available funds will be used, including an implementation plan of how goals, objectives and activities will help meet the predicted outcomes of their respective programs. In accordance with the CNMI Implementation Plan, these categories and/or agencies are allotted at least the following amounts based on the requirements percentages set by VAWA:

- Non Profit, Non-Governmental Victim Services;** of which at least 10% is to be distributed to culturally-specific community based organizations; Victim Services = \$105,132.00; Culturally Specific Services = \$18,566.00; programs that meaningfully address Sexual Assault Purpose only = \$43,399.00. Total for Victim Services = \$167,097.00.
- Law Enforcement** \$102,966.00; programs that meaningfully address Sexual Assault Purpose only = \$36,281.00. Total for law Enforcement: \$139,247.00
- Prosecution** \$102,966.00; Programs that meaningfully address Sexual Assault Purpose only = \$36,281.00. Total for Prosecution \$139,247.00.
- Courts** \$20,035.00; programs that meaningfully address Sexual Assault Purpose only = \$7,813.00. Total for Court \$27,848.00
- Discretionary;** may be spent at the discretion of the state/territory to address statutory program areas, \$83,548.00

**Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) FY2019: \$58,679.00**  
The Sexual Assault Service Program (SASP), created by the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, is the first federal funding stream solely dedicated to the provision of direct intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. Overall, the purpose of SASP is to provide intervention, advocacy, accompaniment, support services, and related assistance for adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault, family and household members of victims, and those collaterally affected by the sexual assault. This grant is for Non Profit agencies that provide sexual assault services only.

The available funds will be awarded by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Council for the Improvement of the Criminal Justice System (CJPA Supervisory Council) through a sub-grant review process and plan consistent with the project description outlined in the program applications and accompanying strategies for the aforementioned DOJ programs. Projects funded under these programs will be monitored and administered by the Criminal Justice Planning Agency. Dates for the award process will be announced at a later date.

**All completed applications and required documents must be submitted to CJPA no later than 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 06, 2020.  
No application will be accepted after the deadline.**


**For Tinian and Rota Applications Only:**  
Completed applications submitted from Rota and Tinian will be accepted by emailing gncamacho222@gmail.com, including a "must" be submitted hardcopy via air waybill with the deadline said above stamped or recorded on the "executed on date and time" section of the air waybill. Incomplete application(s) sent in by fax will not be accepted.

For more information and for interested applicants, please contact CJPA at 664-4550/4551/4554/4556/4558 or stop by the Office on Capitol Hill (Building #1315). Please indicate and specify which grant and year you are applying for on the application. If necessary, please call the CJPA Office at 664-4550.


Indirect Cost are applicable to certain government entities.

/s/ Hon. Alejandro C. Castro  
Chairman, Supervisory Council

/s/ George N. Camacho  
Executive Director, CJPA



**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**  
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INVITATION FOR BIDS  
ITB20-GOV-057

FEMA DR-4235-MP 404 HMGP Commonwealth Utilities Corporation  
Water System Mitigation Project at Site 5 – As-Matusi, Saipan

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Arnold I. Palacios, through the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), (collectively, "Commonwealth") and on behalf of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) are soliciting sealed bids for the supply, construction and implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project located at Site 5 in As-Matusi, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available and may be obtained at Pacific Quick Print & Post, in Garapan, Saipan beginning **February 11, 2020 for \$75.00** (non-refundable), payable to Pacific Quick Print & Post. **All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.**

**Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001 and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70-30-3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.**

There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Wednesday, February 26, 2020 10:00 am ChST** at the Governor's Conference in Capitol Hill, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Ms. Leona DeLeon Guerrero in writing by e-mail to ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408 on or before **Wednesday, March 4, 2020**. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-057 Supply, Construction and Implementation of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water System Mitigation Project at Site 5 in As-Matusi, Saipan**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST March 18, 2020**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST March 18, 2020** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 18, 2020** and mailed to the **Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. BOX 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950** and the bid documents must be received no later than **March 27, 2020**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at **10:00 a.m. ChST, March 30, 2020**. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at **10:00 a.m. ChST, March 18, 2020**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract. Acceptable assets are only:

- Cash
- US Government Securities
- Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is 180 Calendar Days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be \$500.00/day.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS  
(To be part of Solicitation for quotes, ITBs and RFFs)

- Gratuities.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefor. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).
- Kickbacks.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b).
- Contingent Fees.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Virginia C. Villagomez  
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Agnon, Acting Director  
CNMI Procurement & Supply



# WIC is exempted from DHS ‘public charge rule’

By JUSTINE NAUTA  
justine\_nauta@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The CNMI Women, Infants, and Children’s program under the Commonwealth Health-

care Corp. will not be affected by the “public charge rule,” which now allow the Department of Homeland Security to deny legal status to immigrants if they are benefiting

from certain public benefits.

The U.S. Supreme Court reversed a nationwide ban, or injunction, last Jan. 27 that had prevented the DHS from enforcing the public charge

rule. Certain public benefits include Medicaid, nutrition assistance program, or housing assistance.

WIC has clarified that its participants and WIC-eligible

families should not be discouraged from accessing WIC’s nutrition and breastfeeding support services. Additionally, the final rule does not force barriers on children under the age of 21, pregnant women, and postpartum women (60 days after delivery) from accessing Medicaid services, neither does it penalize families if their U.S.-citizen child is accessing benefits.

WIC administrator Eric Camacho said the program recognizes the importance of all families in the community, that each family enhances “our villages, our culture and economy.”

“It is in all of our best interest, ethically and economically, to make sure that mothers and children have what they

need to lead a healthy, happy, and productive lives,” said Camacho.

Camacho added that they stand fully committed to the vision of the WIC program, which is “happy mothers, healthy children, and a resilient community” and their doors will remain open to provide quality nutrition and breastfeeding services in the CNMI.

For more information on the public charge rule visit [www.uscis.gov/legal-resources/final-rule-public-charge-ground-inadmissibility](http://www.uscis.gov/legal-resources/final-rule-public-charge-ground-inadmissibility).

For more information about CHCC programs, visit their Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at @cnmiccc, visit their website at [www.chcc.gov.mp](http://www.chcc.gov.mp), or call them at (670)234-8950.

## Accreditation review commends UOG

The University of Guam has been commended in an interim accreditation review for its work to enhance student success, develop institutional data, and improve the review process for its degree programs.

The university submitted an interim report in November 2019 as a requirement of its reaffirmation of accreditation in 2016. The report was reviewed in January by a panel of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission. The commission accepted the report based on the recommendations of the review panel.

“We are very encouraged by the positive feedback from WSCUC on our efforts toward accreditation reaffirmation in 2024. This is a testament to the collective proactive efforts by our administrators, faculty, and staff to drive continuous improvement to support

high quality programs, degree completion, and overall value,” said Senior vice president of Academic and Student Affairs Anita Borja Enriquez, who serves as the university’s accreditation liaison officer.

Among the commendations in the review was the University’s work in building and leveraging a robust infrastructure of institutional data to drive decisions.

The review also commended the University’s creation of a new “more manageable and meaningful” model for degree program review, which is anticipated to be implemented next academic year, and its development and implementation of diverse, specific, and measurable strategies to enhance student success.

“The University of Guam believes in continual improvement in all that we do, particularly when it comes to the success of our students,” said UOG presi-

dent Thomas W. Krise. “This is a very positive interim review, and all of our university employees should be proud of their contributions.”

The University of Guam received its latest accreditation in 2016 for eight years and is scheduled for its next accreditation reaffirmation visit in 2024.

### About WSCUC

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission is a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as certifying institutional eligibility for federal funding in a number of programs, including student access to federal financial aid.

WSCUC serves a diverse membership of public and private higher education institutions throughout California, Hawaii, and the Pacific as well



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Incoming freshmen to the University of Guam fill the lecture hall during New Student Orientation in August.



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM


Nicko Inoceno, left, and Victoria Flisco conduct a genetic characteristics probability exercise in a biology class at the University of Guam.

COME AND BE BLESSED!

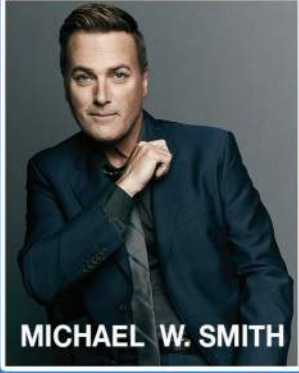
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# Opinion

Hafa Adair

## Saipan Tribune

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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950**Jayvee L. Vallejera** EDITOR  
editor@saipantribune.com**Mark Rabago** ASSOCIATE EDITOR  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com

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### EDITORIAL

## Parkland students started a revolution. Two years later, more of us must battle gun violence

In South Florida, Valentine's Day tugs at the heart. On Feb. 14, 2018, a mentally disturbed teen walked into Marjory Stoneman Douglas High in Parkland and shot 34 students and staff, killing 17 and forever scarring a community.

The school's student survivors found passion in their grief, and two years later they have made a difference in the nation's view of gun violence, not letting go on their anger and putting it to good use.

Days after the shooting, the students transformed into ardent anti-gun activists and demanded change in Tallahassee and Washington that would prevent mass shootings across the country.

Shattered and on fire, they headed to the state's Capitol and confronted Florida lawmakers.

Then-Gov. Rick Scott signed a gun-safety bill on March 9 that raised the age for all gun purchases from 18 to 21, created a three-day waiting period for most firearm purchases, banned bump stocks and created a program to arm and train school faculty.

And students took to the streets of Washington, D.C., to put on the March For Our Lives, make impassioned pleas for reform and declare, "Never Again."

Gun safety advocates say other states followed suit. The Parkland influence spread across the country: Last year, 67 new gun laws were enacted by both Republican and Democratic legislators in 26 states and Washington, D.C.

It's no surprise that little has been accomplished on the federal level, but NRA-cowed lawmakers in Congress nevertheless banned gun stocks.

Parents of the students killed have become fervent anti-gun activists, and are keeping the horror of what happened at Parkland alive.

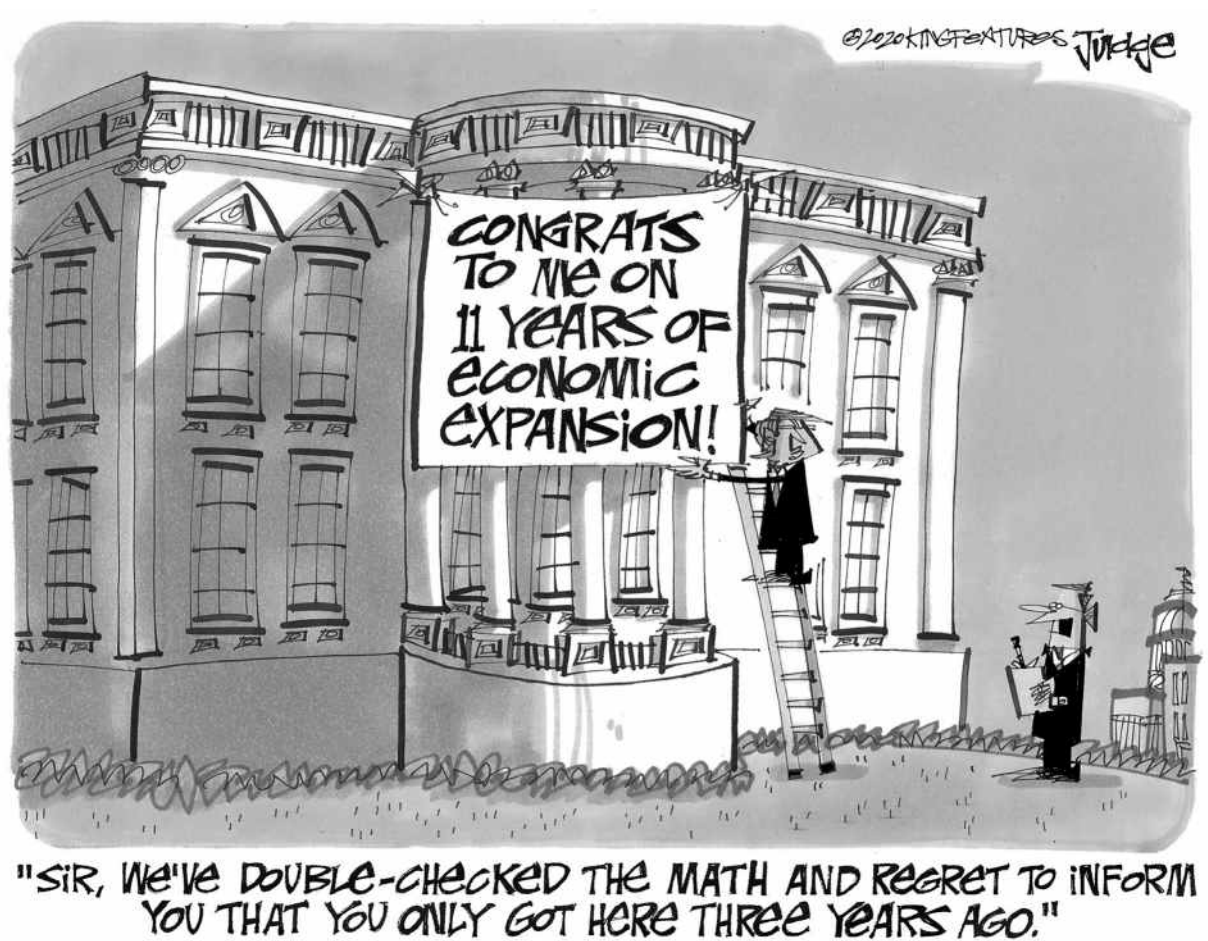
Fred Guttenberg, whose daughter Jaime was among the victims, was recently thrown out of President Trump's State of the Union address for yelling at the president when he failed to address gun control and gun violence in his speech. Guttenberg, a grieving parent on a mission, apologized the next day.

The parents of Joaquin Oliver have made it a mission to keep his voice alive through art. Debbie Hinton, whose husband, Chris, was the school's athletic director, keeps alive his heroic actions that day. He tried to stop the shooter.

Lori Alhadeff, a former teacher whose daughter Alyssa was killed in the shooting, now is a Broward County School Board member and advocate of school safety.

The task of remembering that awful day in South Florida is arduous, and energizing. The ravages of gun violence continue their spread across South Florida. On Thursday, as the Parkland anniversary approached, mothers from Miami-Dade and Broward who had lost children in less-noticed, but no less tragic, shootings met at the corner of Northwest 179th Street and 24th Avenue in Miami Gardens.

See PARKLAND on Next Page



## Democrats, Republicans have undergone a role reversal

For most of my life the rule of thumb was that the GOP was the ideological party and the Democratic Party was the coalitional party.

This always was an overgeneralization. Democrats had an ideological perspective, and Republicans had coalitional interests. But from the New Deal to around the end of the Bush years, it was generally true. I used to think it had to do with the superiority of conservative ideas, but I'm coming around to the view that it has more to do with the way political power works.

There was obviously an ideological component to the New Deal and the Great Society. Stated plainly, the people at the helm of those projects believed in the power of the state or "big government" to steer the whole of the country in a positive direction. But if you look at the members of the FDR coalition, you'll find a lot of diversity. There were intellectuals and populists, capitalists and socialists, racists and civil rights leaders, isolationists and interventionists, corrupt party bosses and the reformers who hated them, poor farmers, urban union leaders, Southern conservatives, blacks, whites, Jews and immigrants, all swirling about, often battling to win the president's favor. That's what you get with majority parties—a diverse coalition of interests all trying to get their place at the trough.

As the saying goes in Washington, if you're not at the table, you're on the menu.

The GOP was a minority party for most of that time, and even when that started to change, it still usually thought like a minority party. By that I mean minority parties emphasize ideological cohesion and partisan unity. Always at a disadvantage, they tend to understand that if they don't stick together, sharing each other's priorities and leveraging what strength they have, they'll get steamrolled by the majority.

It might seem paradoxical, but being in the minority makes arguments over principle more important. When you have little or nothing to trade, you argue about ideas. When you have stuff to trade—taxpayer money, jobs, seats on commissions and committees—ideological differences are easily papered over. Moreover, because majority parties in a democracy are by definition governing parties, there's less reason to get bogged down in debating questions about ideological nuances.

The least ideological politicians in American life have always been the heads of political machines, such as Boss Tweed of Tammany Hall or the mayors of cities like Chicago. In such places, high-minded complaints about principles are easily assuaged with a construction contract or a monopoly on hot dog concessions at the ballpark.

The GOP hasn't exactly figured out how to govern like a ma-

By JONAH GOLDBERG

Tribune News Service

Jonah Goldberg is an editor-at-large of National Review Online and a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. You can write to him in care of this newspaper or by email at [JonahsColumn@aol.com](mailto:JonahsColumn@aol.com).



jority party, but under President Trump it's behaving a lot more like an urban political machine, doling out goodies to members of its coalition with little concern for a coherent philosophic rationale. The role of ideological principles has been decidedly downgraded, as religious and economic conservatives get the stuff they want in terms of policies and jobs.

Meanwhile, the Democrats are behaving more and more like a minority party, putting ideological commitments ahead of coalitional interests. Bernie Sanders is the most obvious and important illustration of this. The de facto front-runner in the Democratic primaries, Sanders is like a left-wing Barry Goldwater—the ideological icon who spearheaded the conservative takeover of the GOP in 1964, in part by losing to Lyndon B. Johnson in a landslide.

Sanders is a pure ideologue who sees no reason to compromise his brand of socialism for the sake of coalitional interests. He wants no help from the rich if the rich expect anything in return. He insists that pro-lifers have no place in his party, and he doesn't seem to care if things like fracking bans will cost the country jobs and his party votes.

My theory isn't neat and tidy because politics are never neat and tidy. Sanders thinks he has the majority on his side. He doesn't.

More broadly, Democrats don't see themselves as a minority party—minority parties are often the last to realize they aren't as popular as they think they are. Also, the desire to defeat Trump has a tendency to crowd out ideological arguments. Which is why Bernie, like every other Democrat, leads with the promise that he is the best candidate to defeat Trump.

And that's a shame, because I'd love to see the billionaire-hating socialist and progressive billionaire capitalist Michael Bloomberg have an actual debate on their ideas. That debate may just have to wait until after Sanders fulfills his role as the woke Goldwater, truly making the Democrats a minority party by losing in 2020.



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Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## Life in China under the coronavirus threat

“**T**his city of 21 million looks like a ghost town. No one goes out. Or very few. And it has been like that for three weeks.” With those words Jim Healy began a Facebook post Sunday evening from Beijing, China. It’s one of his series of posts that bring home the jolting reality of the current depth of human suffering in China—with no end in sight.

From 1989-2009, Healy was a copy editor, and occasional music reviewer, for the San Diego Union-Tribune. In 2014, he started working in Beijing for China’s official English-language newspaper, the China Daily, where he edits Page One of the global edition. Healy is close to the front lines of the coronavirus epidemic, which seems to observe no boundaries, even though his city is more than 700 miles north of Wuhan, the disease epicenter. This column is devoted to his posts on Facebook and his answers to my messaged questions, beginning with his Sunday evening post:

“There is a general sense of stifled panic. We are advised to never leave our apartment, but one must live. No visitors (are) allowed. The gate to (my) apartment community is closed and we need to show our work ID to enter.

“Food is hard to find. Most restaurants are not open. Grocery store shelves are quickly emptied. I am very concerned by all the restaurant workers who cannot earn any money now. Most shops are not open.

“I stocked up on water and buy more every chance I get. ... And, very fortunately, I have enough food for the cats (I am taking care of a friend’s cat as well as my own).

“Very few of us are allowed to go to the office, but since I edit Page One of (the) global edition, I must be on site. Most colleagues are in quarantine if they have traveled outside Beijing, which many have done, because the recent week-long Spring Festival holiday is a traditional travel time.

“Wuhan, the epicenter, is a frightful place now. It is in absolute lock-down. No traffic in or out.”

Are you wearing protective gear? “I wear a surgical mask everywhere I go, either outside or at work. Beijing requires anyone venturing outside to wear a mask.

“But masks are nearly impossible to find now in Beijing. At the office we recently were issued five each. I fortunately have a stockpile from a couple of years ago when the pollution was horrid.

“Each time I enter the gate of my apartment community or office, someone checks my temperature. At one restaurant that is open, they take my temperature upon entering, I must wear a mask upon entering, I must sign in with my name and telephone number, and I must note whether I have been outside Beijing recently. No visitors are allowed at our apartment building.”

On Monday, he posted: “I went by subway today to the tax office. The subway stations were all but empty. So were the streets in mid-afternoon. When I took the photos of the series of skyscrapers (last weekend), I saw just one or two other people in the whole area. Imagine that in a city of 21 million. .... Usually, the roads are filled with cars, electric scooters and buses, the sidewalks teeming with people. But not now.

“I work evenings, and late at night when I go home, I take a shortcut out the back door, which goes through the printing plant

area. ... The orange (lights of the city) at the end of the tunnel is, during the virus outbreak, the dreaded ‘outside world.’ The city that truly never sleeps is now eerily hushed at night.”

A Facebook friend asked how people are buying groceries, getting to work and the impact of this crisis on their lives. Healy replied:

“Many people (are) working from home, but many of my Chinese friends who do not work where I do have lost their jobs. Many are just in limbo.

“Some friends have run out of money in their phones, and most transactions now for food and such are made via phones. (Very little cash changes hands in China anymore.) So they must use their phones to get food, because they are not supposed to go outside, but they have no money at their disposal.” (He explained that couriers deliver the food or supplies to the gate of housing complexes but no delivery people are allowed inside the communities.)

“Many of my friends are asking for help because they have no money for food or anything else, and no prospects for getting any. In addition, any government aid is provided only at the city of your birth, so Chinese (people) from outside Beijing who live in Beijing have no safety net whatsoever unless they go home, which in some cases is not possible.

“I have really tapped deep into my bank account this month because so many friends simply cannot eat.

“I think it is easy in the big media picture to never see how this really affects many people; sometimes people fall between the cracks and raising an awareness serves to increase understanding outside China of how many people are hurting now.”

Are Chinese authorities sharing information with the newspaper? “We are in close touch with government agencies that release frequent updates. We also have an army of reporters across the whole country and beyond.

“I have seen many heart-wrenching videos—doors to apartment buildings being welded shut in Wuhan to enforce the quarantine; fires sparked after people disinfect their surroundings or clothing with alcohol; and people suspected of having the virus being dragged out of their homes by crews in protective suits.

“But the most gripping video I’ve yet seen is a 15-second clip from one of our reporters on the front line. It shows the emergency entrance of a hospital in Wuhan at night. In the eerie yellow light, a coroner’s van slowly pulls away, with a person wearing a mask trailing behind it on foot, and you hear a young woman’s piercing shriek of ‘Mama! Mama! Mama!’”

“Apparently the bodies are removed immediately and cremat-

By **DIANE BELL**

The San Diego Union-Tribune

*Diane Bell is a columnist for the San Diego Union-Tribune.*



ed, so families have no chance to say goodbye.”

On Tuesday Healy wrote about Wuhan: “I feel the strong pull of the journalist to go to where things are the worst right now, if it weren’t for the language barrier. But I want to see with my own eyes. I cannot imagine what Wuhan, Hubei province, is like. ...

“We had (about) 50 reporters volunteer to go there. One of our best, who is on the medical beat, volunteered to go last week. ... He filed from the front line and I got to edit the story for our global edition. What he must see and feel being in such a dismal place is beyond my imagination.

“The city (of Wuhan) is no doubt heartbroken. And there is a stigma now. People are afraid of anyone from there.

“It would be truly touching if a city outside China became a new sister city of Wuhan right now and people channeled help and love and messages of support.”

Do you have a way to return to the United States? “Flights to and from China are increasingly being canceled, so I am probably here for the long haul. But this is my city now, and these are my friends.

“I feel a solidarity with the people of China and do not want to leave them behind. And as a journalist, I feel privileged to play a role in helping to cover the crisis so the world can understand the situation better.

“Though China and its people may be distant geographically, they are wonderful people facing a horrible, tremendously painful crisis right now. Prayers, messages, donations big or small and words of encouragement are more helpful than you might imagine.

“We cannot ignore the situation, and we must be vigilant, no matter where we live, because with increasing travel and globalization, all people are one family. This virus, or any other, could affect any of us. I would also implore people not to stigmatize the people of China or, especially, the good people of Wuhan.”

Healy ends his Monday morning post with these words: “This is an extraordinary time and I feel very bad for the sick, the lonely, the vulnerable, especially the elderly. I see a lot of people here talking about prayer, which is remarkable.”

## T.O.A.S.T.: To Others Any Sweet Time

“**C**rushing us whole with its weight, the pressure pounds insanity into our brains”  
—opening lines from *The Breath Of Love* by Ali Nuri, 2019.

### Love Lost on Paper Tossed

Valentines on stormy seas tossed inside of me  
valentines on the ocean, high tides with emotion  
my love’s labor lost in letters and notes to thee  
caring, unthinking, you’ll always have my devotion  
valentines read in bed, love’s red lights on my mind  
love on a warm water bed a roiling sea rolling  
warm weather today the trade winds are kind  
waves lap on the shore their sounds consoling  
dreaming of loving times spent with you  
writing doggerel rhymes for you sometimes  
your eyes reflect the color of tropical sea blue  
with tiny speckles of green the color of limes  
when I went to dump some paper scraps  
in the wastebasket, valentines from me? perhaps.

### ME, MY SELFIE, AND WHY

“of all the visions that haunt me, growing old alone has to be the most terrifying”  
—from his poem *The Promise* by Iraqi poet, Ali Nur, 2019.

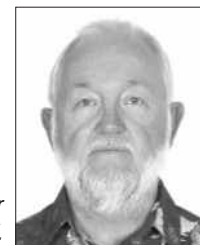
I used to tell my students when I see you I see me  
I’m not looking at a “man in the mirror”

### LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY ‘PEPE BATBON’ CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.*



“I am you as you are me” and well we are we  
DNA shows the lack of differences much clearer  
*Mad Magazine* has a cartoon philosopher comic  
who has great big ears and a goofy toothy smile  
his well known saying What Me Worry defied tragic  
Mr. Alfred E. Newman had a way to begin to beguile  
the closer you are to your face for a selfie  
it shuts out the location of exactly where you are  
you might be hanging out with bats in a belfry  
or ‘hitching your wagon’ to a giant blue star  
regardless the time, place, event, or occasion  
whether ego, id, conscious or subconscious mind  
eliminating background hides your situation  
prevents future viewers from knowing what’s behind  
that tear, smile, grimace, or super goofy look  
and puts you in the why Did He Take It? Book.

## PARKLAND

From Page 10

Their children, too, were been killed by gunfire, said Tangela Sears, an anti-gun-violence activist who lost a son in a shooting and who formed the group of grieving mothers who usually meet once a month, told the Herald.

They, too, are in pain. They, too, must be heard. Their voices, too, matter.

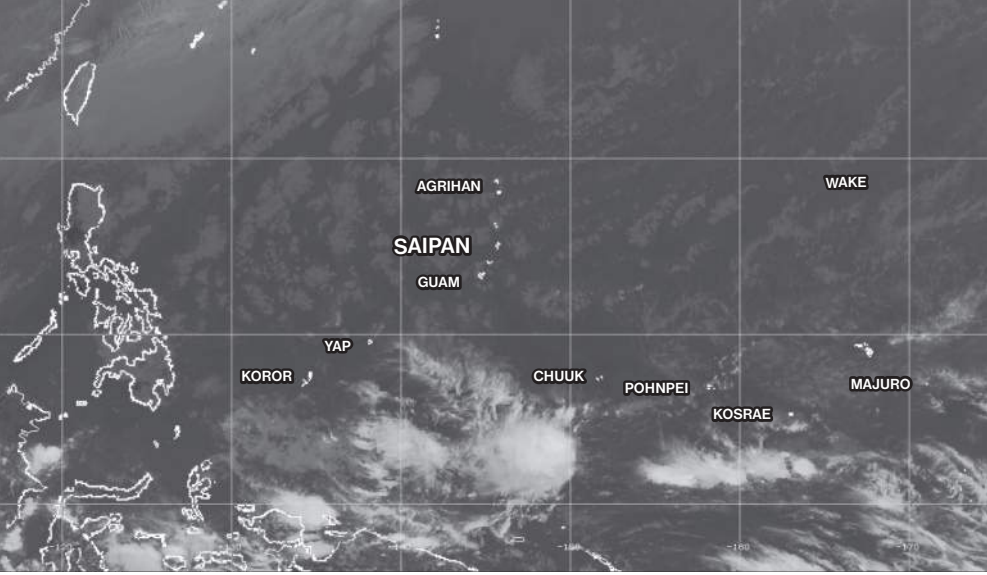
On Friday, the cities of Parkland and Coral Springs held events to remember those killed in the mass shooting—including a moment of silence observed at 2:21 p.m., the moment when the shooting began at the school.

And so it should be. The tragedy of Parkland must continue to serve as motivation for addressing gun violence in America.



# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.		Partly cloudy. Isolated showers.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
87°	74°	87°	75°	87°	75°	86°	74°	85°	74°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



**PICTURE TIME: 8:19 AM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2020**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A fairly dry pattern remains in place over the Marianas this morning. Deep-layer moisture shows no indication of any big increase through the week, therefore maintained isolated showers through the week. Models continue to indicate another shear line approaching the islands, though a little later in the week. decided to maintain the previous forecast for now and will see how future model runs evolve with this scenario. Either way, moisture increase will be minimal, resulting in showers remaining isolated into next weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

MICRONESIA			▲▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Windy	83° / 75°	
Palau	Showers	84° / 77°	
Yap	Mostly Sunny	86° / 79°	
Chuuk	Showers	85° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Windy	86° / 78°	
Kosrae	Windy	86° / 78°	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	86° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	77° / 64°	
Beijing	Sunny	48° / 27°	
Hong Kong	Sunny	64° / 61°	
Honolulu	Windy	81° / 70°	
London	Windy	52° / 41°	
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	75° / 54°	
Manila	Showers	86° / 73°	
Melbourne	Showers	64° / 55°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	81° / 73°	
New York	Showers	51° / 38°	
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	50° / 39°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	54° / 43°	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	52° / 39°	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°	
Salem	Showers	68° / 58°	
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	59° / 43°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	48° / 28°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	54° / 41°	
Washington, DC	Showers	56° / 40°	

## NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.net](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.net)

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:11 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.45	
9:54 AM	LOW TIDE	1.11	
2:54 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.61	
10:43 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.21	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:40 AM	6:21 PM
Wednesday	6:40 AM	6:21 PM
Thursday	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Friday	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Saturday	6:38 AM	6:22 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	2:10 AM	1:44 PM	-
Wednesday	3:06 AM	2:36 PM	-
Thursday	4:00 AM	3:30 PM	-
Friday	4:50 AM	4:23 PM	-
Saturday	5:37 AM	5:15 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily				
				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
ROTA TO GUAM				FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
				2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily



# Business

## Cost of China’s anti-virus fight rises with workers idle

BEIJING (AP)—Real estate agent Du Xuekun’s sales usually jump after the Lunar New Year holiday. But this year, Du has been at home for a month

with no income after vast swathes of China’s economy were shut down in a sweeping effort to contain a virus outbreak. Du, who lives in Jiaozhuo,

near the central city of Zhengzhou, is one of millions of people who are bearing the soaring cost of the most extreme anti-disease measures ever imposed. Some businesses are reopening, but Beijing has told the public to stay home if possible.

“People will buy food and clothes online but for sure won’t buy an apartment without seeing it,” said Du.

Industries from auto sales to travel to retailing effectively shut down after curbs were imposed starting Jan. 23 with the suspension of most access to Wuhan, an industrial metropolis of 11 million people at the center of the outbreak.

■■■■  
**TOKYO (AP)—The Japanese economy shrank at an annual pace of 6.3% last quarter as growth was battered by typhoons and crimped consumer spending.**

**The seasonally adjusted economic data released Monday by the Cabinet Office comes amid looming fears about the economic damage expected from the new viral illness COVID-19 that began in China late last year.**

**Japan’s gross domestic product, or GDP, the sum of the value of a nation’s products and services, slipped 1.6% in the last three months of 2019 quarter-on-quarter.**

**The annualized rate shows what the drop would have been if that same pace had continued for a year.**

**The contraction for the October-December period was the first Japan had in more than a year. The amount of decline was the worst in about five years.**

**The news sent the Nikkei 225 benchmark stock index falling in trading Monday.**

■■■■  
Travel restrictions expanded to cities with more than 60 million people, while curbs on business spread nationwide. The Lunar New Year holiday was extended to keep factories and offices closed. Nationwide, thousands of restaurants and cinemas have been shut to prevent crowds from gathering.

The rising losses threaten to become a political liability for the ruling Communist Party. Local officials have been ordered to revive business activity but are moving cautiously.

By Sunday, some 1,665 deaths and 68,500 cases had been reported in the two months since the first infections in December.

Economists warn optimism that the disease might be under control is premature. Even if auto manufacturing and other business resumes as planned, activity won’t be back to normal until at least mid-March.

Losses are expected to be so large that forecasters have cut estimates for China’s economic growth.

Forecasters including Capital Economics say growth, already at multi-decade lows, might fall to 2% in the three months ending in March, down from the previous quarter’s official figure of 6%.

“If the economy really gets into a tailspin, the challenge for the party will be substantially increased,” said Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at London’s School of Oriental and African Studies.

Locking down Wuhan might have hurt more than it helped by causing panic and was “very damaging to the economy,” said Tsang.

“They will have to rethink the lockdown approach,” he said.


The ruling party has responded to the mounting economic pressure by promising tax breaks and subsidies to companies hurt by the anti-disease measures.

The government needs to “maintain stable economic operation and social harmony,” President Xi Jinping said Wednesday.


On Friday, the Ministry of Finance announced that companies with monthly sales below 100,000 yuan (\$14,000) will be exempt from value-added and other taxes. It said companies that cannot repay loans might be allowed to invoke “force majeure,” a last-resort legal measure that can waive obligations in disasters.

Travel and hospitality were hardest-hit after the government canceled group tours and told businesspeople to put off travel. Airlines canceled thousands of flights and hotels closed.

The manager of a travel agency in Shenyang, the biggest city in China’s northeast, said its monthly revenue, usually 100,000 yuan (\$14,000), fell to zero. He said the agency still is paying rent and wages of 20,000 yuan (\$2,800) a month.



**Commonwealth Utilities Corporation**  
Office of the Executive Director



**INVITATION FOR BIDS**  
**CUC-IFB-20-010**

**SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF POWER DISTRIBUTION ANNUAL MATERIALS**

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified vendors for the Supply and Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials for Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

CUC may award a contract to more than one firm for the materials, based on bids for “Commodity Groups”.

**One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “CUC-IFB-20-010, Supply & Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials, Saipan, CNMI” to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 6, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. *An electronic copy of the entire submission is also required to be sent via email to CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.*

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier’s check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. The Bid bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers’ questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI’s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI’s Insurance Code.*

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor’s preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.


This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract(s) is contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Board of Director’s approval. The contract(s) will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 21, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email address [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC Senior Purchasing Technician via email [christie.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:christie.sablan@cucgov.org), Joseph Crisostomo, CUC Power Division, Purchasing Technician via email [joseph.crisostomo@cucgov.org](mailto:joseph.crisostomo@cucgov.org) and Alfred Palattao, CUC Power Division, Engineer via email [alfred.palattao@cucgov.org](mailto:alfred.palattao@cucgov.org).


CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO  
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



**Commonwealth Utilities Corporation**  
Office of the Executive Director



**INVITATION FOR BIDS**  
**CUC-IFB-20-012**

**SR-2 SEWER LIFT STATION REHABILITATION**

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the SR-2 Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of construction of a new sewer lift station to replace the existing SR-2 sewer lift station; installation of new gravity sewer mains, manhole, force main from the new lift station to the nearest existing sewer force main, retaining wall, guard rail, installation of Owner-Furnished Contractor-Installed (OFCI) submersible duplex pump and controller; construction of a new generator building and appurtenances; demolition of the entire existing generator buildings, accessories, appurtenances and existing minor structures. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the sewer system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **270 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

*The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.*

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **February 20, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies** of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “CUC-IFB-20-012, SR-2 Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project” to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) March 10, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time.

Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier’s check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers’ questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI’s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI’s Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor’s preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 24, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water & Wastewater Engineer via email address [nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org](mailto:nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org) and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address [christie.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:christie.sablan@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO  
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



# Nation

## Floods put Mississippi capital in ‘precarious situation’

**JACKSON, Miss. (AP)**—With the waters in the Pearl River continuing to rise in and around Mississippi’s capital city and more rain on the way this week, the governor warned residents that it would be days before flood waters start to recede.

Gov. Tate Reeves said Sunday morning that the Pearl would continue to rise throughout the day, and he warned that the state faces a “precarious situation that can turn at any moment.”

In one Jackson neighborhood, residents paddled canoes, kayaks and small fishing boats to check on their houses, giving lifts to other neighbors. Some were able to get inside while others peeked into the windows to see what, if any damage, had been done inside. Outside floodwaters lapped at mailboxes, street signs and cars that had been left in driveways.

In a bit of good news, officials at a reservoir upriver of the capitol said Sunday that water levels in the reservoir

had stabilized, allowing them to send less water downriver. The National Weather Service, which had been anticipating the river would crest Sunday at 38 feet, on Sunday slightly reduced that to 37.5 feet. The river is now anticipated to crest Monday.

But even with that development, officials urged residents to pay attention to evacuation orders, check on road closures before traveling and stay out of floodwaters, warning that even seemingly placid waters could

mask fast-moving currents and pollution. Law enforcement officials went door to door in affected areas, telling people to evacuate, Reeves said.

Rescuers performed four assisted evacuations Saturday, although they said none were needed overnight.

“We expect the river to continue to rise over the next 24 hours or so,” Reeves said at a news conference in Jackson. “We are not out of the woods yet.”

Jackson Mayor Chokwe Lumumba said power had

been shut off to 504 residences as a safety precaution. He said some city homes had been flooded but officials do not yet know how many. About 30 people are at a shelter that has been set up in Jackson, he said.

Nearly 2,400 structures across the three counties closest to the river and the reservoir—Hinds, Rankin and Madison counties—could be impacted, meaning they either get water inside or are surrounded by water, said Malary White, of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

In the suburb of Flowood, John and Jina Smith had packed up as much as they could and left their home as waters rose Thursday.

On Sunday, their neighbor Dale Frazier took them back to their house in a rowboat, where they checked on the damage, then got in their own canoe and rowed away.

“We’ve been able to stay in here when the water gets

up,” John Smith said. “But as you’ve watched it over the years, you know when to get out. It’s time to get out this time.”

A foot and a half of water was inside his house, Smith said. He’d already been in touch with a contractor and insurance agent about rebuilding. Both he and his wife said they love their home, where they can sit on their back porch and watch deer and other wildlife.

“It’s going to take a while for us to rebuild, but we are safe, and we’re all OK,” Jina Smith said.

On Frazier’s lot next door, the water was at the bottom of the driveway but had not crept inside the one-story house where he’s lived for 23 years.

“The water is very close to my house. It could flood; it could not flood. It depends on the crest right now,” he said.

Down the street, a Presbyterian church and several businesses were flooded.



AP  
A house address sign floats as water from the Pearl River floods this Jackson, Miss., neighborhood Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020.

## Stop and frisk gets renewed attention in Bloomberg candidacy

**NEW YORK (AP)**—David Ourlicht was a college student, walking down a street near campus, when he became one of millions of New Yorkers swept up in the era of stop and frisk.

A police officer accosted Ourlicht, deeming suspicious a bulge in his jacket. Police patted him down, told him to stand against a wall, emptied his pockets, finding nothing illegal, and accused him of lying about his address, according to court testimony. The 2008 encounter ended with a disorderly conduct summons, which was later dismissed.

Ourlicht was embarrassed, angry and rattled, but not surprised. Police encounters like that had become a cornerstone of policing under then-Mayor Mike Bloomberg and a fact of life for Ourlicht, who is of black and white heritage, and his friends growing up.

He later joined a lawsuit that

helped curb stop and frisk and became a lawyer himself. But his experiences with police, which he says began with getting beaten and handcuffed at 15 while trying to go up to his apartment, still cast a shadow over his life today.

“Every day I get into my car, every day I decide to step out of my house, it’s a psyching up that I have to do to myself,” Ourlicht said. “It’s always there.”

New York’s stop-and-frisk history is getting renewed attention as Bloomberg campaigns for the Democratic presidential nomination. Bloomberg long defended the practice, even after a federal judge found that the stops discriminated against those who were black or Latino. He abruptly apologized in November shortly before announcing his White House bid and has largely sought to move past the issue.

That became difficult last

week when a 2015 recording of Bloomberg resurfaced in which he said the way to bring down murder rates is to “put a lot of cops” in minority neighborhoods because that’s where “all the crime is.”

Bloomberg said the remarks “do not reflect my commitment to criminal justice reform and racial equity.” He has since gotten endorsements from some members of the Congressional Black Caucus. And as he campaigned in the South last week, many black voters said they weren’t offended by the comments and were more focused on finding a candidate who could beat President Donald Trump.

But the former mayor likely will face more questions about the practice as his campaign gains traction. Bloomberg is on the cusp of qualifying for Wednesday’s presidential debate, where his rivals are sure to pillory him on stop and frisk to blunt his rise and appeal to

African Americans, who are a critical voting bloc in the Democratic primary.

Stop and frisk is a term for a tactic police have long used: accosting, questioning and sometimes patting down people who officers think might be doing something illegal, but the suspicions didn’t necessarily amount to probable cause for an arrest.

The New York Police Department began increasing its emphasis on stop and frisk in the mid-1990s, when Republican Rudy Giuliani was mayor. But stops soared under Bloomberg — who held office as a Republican and later an independent—rising from about 97,000 stops in 2002 to a high of about 685,000 in 2011. There were fewer than 13,500 stops last year, according to NYPD data.

Over 80% of the people stopped during the surge of stop and frisk were black or Latino.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### Police: 1 dead, 4 wounded in Connecticut club shooting

**HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)**—Gunfire erupted at a Connecticut nightclub early Sunday morning, killing a man and wounding four other people, police said. A 28-year-old man died in the shooting at the Majestic Lounge in Hartford’s South End, police Lt. Paul Cicero said. Two other males and two females were wounded, with two of them in surgery Sunday morning and two in stable condition, he said. None of their names were released. Police officers had been stationed outside the club because of previous problems there and reported the shooting at about 1:30 a.m. Officers rushed in, but were confronted with a large number of people running toward the exits, Cicero said. “Everybody started pushing their way out to get away from the gunfire,” he said. “It was kind of pandemonium.”

#### Hawaii police say thieves took \$1K worth of pungent fruit

**HONOLULU (AP)**—Police in Hawaii are investigating the theft of fruit valued at about \$1,000 including durian, which is known for its powerful odor. Two men entered a property in Hilo on

the Big Island and removed 18 durian and other types of fruit on the night of Feb. 1, the Hawaii Police Department said. Authorities released a surveillance camera image of two suspects and asked the public for additional information that could lead to the capture of the fruit bandits. The tropical, spiky durian fruit resembles a small porcupine and typically weighs from 2 to 7 pounds (1 to 3 kilograms).

#### Ring lost in Maine is found in Finland 47 years later

**BRUNSWICK, Maine (AP)**—A high school class ring that was lost in Maine in 1973 has been found in a forest in Finland. Debra McKenna, 63, lost the ring in Portland when she was a student at Morse High School, the Bangor Daily News reported. She said the ring was largely forgotten until a sheet metal worker found it under 8 inches (20 centimeters) of soil in a Finnish forest 47 years later. The ring belonged to McKenna’s late husband Shawn, who she dated all throughout high school and college. The couple was married for 40 years until Shawn died in 2017 after a six-year battle with cancer. Shawn gave McKenna the ring before he left for college, and she accidentally left it in a department store.



# Asia

## China sees rise in new virus cases, death toll rises by 105

**BEIJING (AP)**—Chinese authorities on Monday reported a slight upturn in new virus cases and 105 more deaths for a total of 1,770 since the outbreak began two months ago.

The 2,048 new cases followed three days of declines but was up by just 39 cases from the previous day's figure. Another 10,844 people have recovered from COVID-19, a disease caused by the new coronavirus, and have been discharged from hospitals, according to Monday's figures.

The update followed the publication late Saturday in China's official media of a recent speech by President Xi Jinping in which he indicated for the first time that he had led the response to the outbreak from early in the crisis. While the reports were an apparent attempt to demonstrate the Communist Party leadership acted decisively from the start, it also opened Xi up to criticism over why the public was not alerted sooner.

In his speech, Xi said he gave instructions on fighting the virus on Jan. 7 and ordered the shutdown of the most-affected cities that began on Jan. 23.

The disclosure of his speech indicates top leaders knew about the outbreak's potential severity at least two weeks before such dangers were made known to the public. It was not until late January that officials said the virus can spread between humans and public alarm began to rise.

New cases in other countries are raising growing concerns about containment of the virus.

Taiwan on Sunday reported



People wearing protective face masks cross a street in Tokyo, Monday, Feb. 17, 2020.

AP

its first death from COVID-19, the fifth fatality outside of mainland China. Taiwan's Central News Agency, citing health minister Chen Shih-chung, said the man who died was in his 60s and had not traveled overseas recently and had no known contact with virus patients.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe convened an experts meeting to discuss containment measures in his country, where more than a dozen cases have emerged in the past few days without any obvious link to China.

"The situation surrounding this virus is changing by the minute," Abe said.

Japanese Health Minis-

ter Katsunobu Kato said the country is "entering into a phase that is different from before," requiring new steps to stop the spread of the virus.

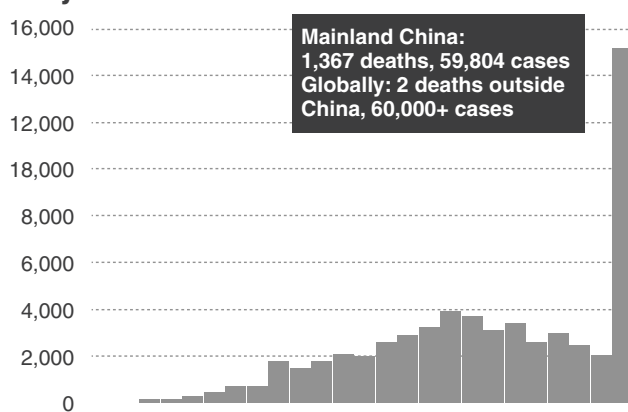
Japan now has 413 confirmed cases, including 355 from a quarantined cruise ship, and one death from the virus. Its total is the highest number of cases among about two dozen countries outside of China where the illness has spread.

Hundreds of Americans from the cruise ship took charter flights home, as Japan announced another 70 infections had been confirmed on the Diamond Princess. Canada, Hong Kong and Italy were planning similar flights.

### Sudden spike in coronavirus

*A revised diagnosis of counting cases is the reason for the large spike. This means people diagnosed on the basis of their symptoms plus a CT scan of their lungs, rather than testing positive for the coronavirus.*

#### Daily cases in China



Source: AP, BBC, China National Health Commission  
Graphic: Staff, TNS

The 300 or so Americans flying on U.S.-government chartered aircraft back to the U.S. will face another 14-day quarantine at Travis Air Force Base in California and Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. The U.S. Embassy said the departure was offered because people on the ship were at a high risk of exposure to the virus. People with symptoms were banned from the flights.

About 255 Canadians and 330 Hong Kong residents are on board the ship or undergoing treatment in Japanese hospitals. There are also 35 Italians, of which 25 are crew members, including the captain.

In China's Hubei province, where the outbreak began in December, all vehicle traffic will be banned in another containment measure. It expands a vehicle ban in the provincial capital, Wuhan, where public transportation, trains and planes have been halted for weeks.

Exceptions were being made for vehicles involved in epidemic prevention and transporting daily necessities.

Hubei has built new hospitals with thousands of patient beds and China has sent thousands of military medical personnel to staff the new facilities and help the overburdened health care system.

Last Thursday, Hubei changed how it recognized COVID-19 cases, accepting a doctor's diagnosis rather than waiting for confirmed laboratory test results, in order to treat patients faster. The tally spiked by more than 15,000 cases under the new method.

## Americans who left cruise trade one quarantine for another

**TOKYO (AP)**—Americans Cheryl and Paul Molesky decided to trade one coronavirus quarantine for another.

The couple from Syracuse, New York, cut short a 14-day quarantine on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in the port of Yokohama, near Tokyo, to fly back to the United States. But leaving the ship meant they had to spend another two-week quarantine period at a U.S. military facility to make sure they don't have the new virus that's been sweeping across Asia.

Defense Minister Taro Kono tweeted Monday that Japanese troops helped transport 340 U.S. passengers on 14 buses from Yokohama to Haneda airport. About 380 Americans were on the cruise ship. The U.S. State Department said later that two charter flights carrying cruise ship passengers had departed

Tokyo and were on their way to the United States.

Canada, Hong Kong and Italy said they were planning similar flights of passengers.

Cheryl sent The Associated Press a video of her and her husband, Paul, boarding the plane with other Americans.

"Well, we're exhausted, but we're on the plane and that's a good feeling. Pretty miserable wearing these masks though, and everybody had to go to the bathroom on the bus," she said.

The U.S. Embassy in Tokyo said Washington evacuated the Americans because the passengers and crew members on board the Diamond Princess were at a high risk of exposure to the virus.

The Americans were flown to Travis Air Force Base in California and Lackland Air Force Base in Texas.

After arriving in the U.S., all of the passengers must go through another 14 days of quarantine — meaning they will have been under quarantine for a total of nearly four weeks. Other governments, including Canada and Hong Kong, also will require the passengers to undergo a second 14-day quarantine.

"We are glad to be going home," Cheryl Molesky earlier told NHK TV in Japan. "It's just a little bit disappointing that we'll have to go through quarantine again, and we will probably not be as comfortable as the Diamond Princess, possibly."

Molesky also said she was worried about the rising number of patients on the ship.

"It's a little bit scary with the numbers going up of the people being taken off the ship for the (virus), so I think its time to go. I think its time to cut our losses and take off," she said.

Japan on Sunday announced another 70 infections on the Diamond Princess, raising the ship's total number of cases to 355. Overall, Japan has 413 confirmed cases of the virus, including one death.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health, said Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation," that 40 Americans have been infected, and those showing symptoms will not be able to get on the evacuation plane.

"If people on the plane start to develop symptoms, they'll be segregated within the plane," Fauci said, adding that the additional 14-day quarantine is because of the "degree of transmissibility on that cruise ship is essentially akin to being in a hot spot."

He added that an infected person who shows minimal symptoms could still pass the virus to someone else.

Asked how they felt about the additional 14-day quarantine in the United

States, Cheryl Molesky sighed, and her husband said, "If we have to go through that, we will go through that."

Everyone was expected to receive a checkup before being allowed on the chartered flight, and the embassy said that those who showed symptoms of sickness would not be permitted to board the plane.

Some American passengers said they would pass up the opportunity to fly to the United States because of the additional quarantine. There also was worry about being on a long flight with other passengers who may be infected or in an incubation period.

One of the Americans, Matthew Smith, said in a tweet Sunday that he saw a passenger with no face mask talking at close quarters with another passenger. He said he and his wife scurried away. "If there are secondary infections on board, this is why. ... And you wanted me to get on a bus with her?" he said.



# World

## Wales bears the brunt as Storm Dennis hammers Britain

**LONDON** (AP)—Storm Dennis hammered Britain Sunday, bringing a month's worth of rain in just 48 hours to parts of South Wales, which bore the brunt of the country's second severe storm inside a week.

Rivers across Britain burst their banks and a number of severe flood warnings remained in place as authorities strove to get people to safety and to protect homes and businesses. The Met Office, Britain's meteorological service, said the disruption is set to carry through into Monday.

Major incidents have been declared in a number of areas in England and Wales as authorities mobilized resources to deal with the impact of the overflowing rivers that have cut off some communities.

A man in his 60s died after falling into the River Tawe in South Wales mid-morning and his body was found further along the river, Dyfed-Powys Police said on social media. Police said his death was not being treated as suspicious or being linked to the bad weather.

On Saturday, Storm Dennis was blamed for the deaths of two men who were pulled from the sea in separate searches off England's south-eastern coast.

Dennis has been so intense that England posted a record number of flood warnings and alerts and a rare "red warning"



Rescue operations continue as emergency services take residents to safety, in Nantgarw, Wales, Sunday Feb. 16, 2020.

AP

for extremely life-threatening flooding was announced for South Wales.

The Met Office, Britain's meteorological service, only issues its highest red warning when it thinks the weather

will be so dangerous there's a "risk to life" and that people must take immediate action to protect themselves. It was the first time a red warning has been sounded since December 2015.

reporters.

Libya has been in turmoil since 2011, when a civil war toppled longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi, who was later killed.

A weak U.N.-recognized administration that now holds the capital of Tripoli and parts of the country's west is backed by Turkey, which recently sent thousands of soldiers to Libya, and to a lesser degree Qatar and Italy as well as local militias.

On the other side is a rival government in the east that supports self-styled Gen. Khalifa Hifter, whose forces launched an offensive to capture Tripoli last April. They are backed by the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, France and Russia.

Since the Berlin summit, the rival Libyan military factions have met in Geneva in a U.N.-led effort to forge a lasting truce. A first round of talks ended without officials signing an agreement, but Maas said a second round will begin in Geneva on Tuesday.

Though the warning only lasted a few hours, South Wales Police declared a major incident as firefighters and rescue crews continued to help communities following multiple floods, landslides and evacuations. Nearby Gwent Police said residents of Skenfrith, Monmouthshire, were being advised to evacuate due to the flooding.

The Met Office said the highest wind gust recorded was 91 mph (146 kph) at Aberdaron in north Wales on

Saturday. It also said a total of 157.6 mm (6.1 inches) of rain fell at Crai Reservoir in the Welsh county of Powys over 48 hours to Sunday morning. One of the worst-hit areas in South Wales was the village of Nantgarw, Rhondda Cynon Taff, near Cardiff, which saw entire streets left underwater since the early hours of Sunday morning.

As the wet and windy weather started to clear across parts of the south and headed north and eastwards, the number of

flood warnings across the U.K. declined but there were still around 360 of them in place Sunday, from the north of Scotland through to Cornwall in southwest England.

John Curtin, the executive director of flood and coastal risk management at the Environment Agency, said in a tweet that at one point during the day, England had the most flood warnings and lower-level alerts in force—594—than on any other day on record.

## Powers renew pledge to uphold Libya arms embargo

**MUNICH** (AP)—Countries with interests in Libya's civil war recommitted themselves Sunday to uphold a barely working arms embargo, four weeks after a peace summit in Berlin was followed by numerous new arms violations, officials from Germany and the U.N. said.

Germany and the U.N., which co-hosted the Jan. 19 Berlin summit, gathered foreign ministers and other officials from a dozen countries on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference to try to bolster a drive to cut off outside military support for Libya's warring parties.

The countries involved include the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, along with Italy, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. Sunday's meeting formally launched an international follow-up committee on Libya. Italy will co-chair the next meeting, in Rome in March.

At the Berlin summit, participants agreed to respect the

arms embargo, hold off on military support to Libya's warring parties and push them to reach a full cease-fire. But U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says that agreement has been repeatedly violated by continuing arms deliveries and an escalation in fighting.

On Sunday, the participants "had a discussion on the deplorable recent violations of the arms embargo, renewed their determination to contribute to its thorough implementation and welcomed progress regarding more efficient monitoring of the embargo," the German and U.N. hosts said in a statement.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said they spoke "very openly" about recent violations.

"Different opinions were voiced on what this is down to, but everyone agrees that the road we have taken—namely, to separate the parties to the conflict from their supporters—remains the only promising road to ending the civil war in Libya," he told

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Denmark arrests 27 people on suspected cocaine smuggling

**HELSINKI, Finland** (AP)—Danish police say they have arrested 27 people for suspected drug smuggling after finding some 100 kilograms of cocaine on a Bahamas-registered cargo vessel plying Danish waters. Copenhagen police said Sunday in a statement that the cocaine was seized during an internationally coordinated bust on Saturday on the container ship Duncan Island while it was sailing south of the town of Gedser. The suspects, all foreigners, are charged with serious drug crimes under Danish law and may face a sentence of up to 16 years in prison. They include the vessel's international crew with Russian, Latvian, Ecuadorian and Filipino nationals among others and remain in custody pending further investigation. "We're naturally very pleased that many kilos of cocaine have not hit the street. Now we are investigating further to find out who is waiting in vain for the deliveries," said Inspector Danie Rise, the head of the special investigation unit at the Copenhagen police.

#### UN: Antarctic high temp records will take months to verify

**BERLIN** (AP)—Record high temperatures reportedly measured in Antarctica will take months to verify, the U.N. weather agency said Sunday. A spokesman for the World Meteorological Organization said the measurements made by researchers from Argentina and Brazil earlier this month have to undergo a formal process to ensure that they meet international standards. "A formal decision on whether or not this is a record is likely to be several months away," said Jonathan Fowler, the WMO spokesman. Scientists at an Argentine research base measured a temperature of 18.3 degrees Celsius (nearly 65 degrees Fahrenheit) Feb. 6 on a peninsula that juts out from Antarctica toward the southern tip of South America. The previous record there was 17.5 degrees Celsius (63.5 degrees Fahrenheit) in March 2015. Last week, researchers from Brazil claimed to have measured temperatures of 20.75 degrees Celsius on an island off the peninsula—beating the record for the entire Antarctic region of 19.8 Celsius in January 1982.



# Focus

By **STEVE PEOPLES** and  
**ALAN FRAM**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**L**AS VEGAS (AP)—A growing number of Democratic lawmakers, union officials, state leaders and party strategists agree that Bernie Sanders is a risky nominee to put up against President Donald Trump. There's less agreement about whether — and how — to stop him.

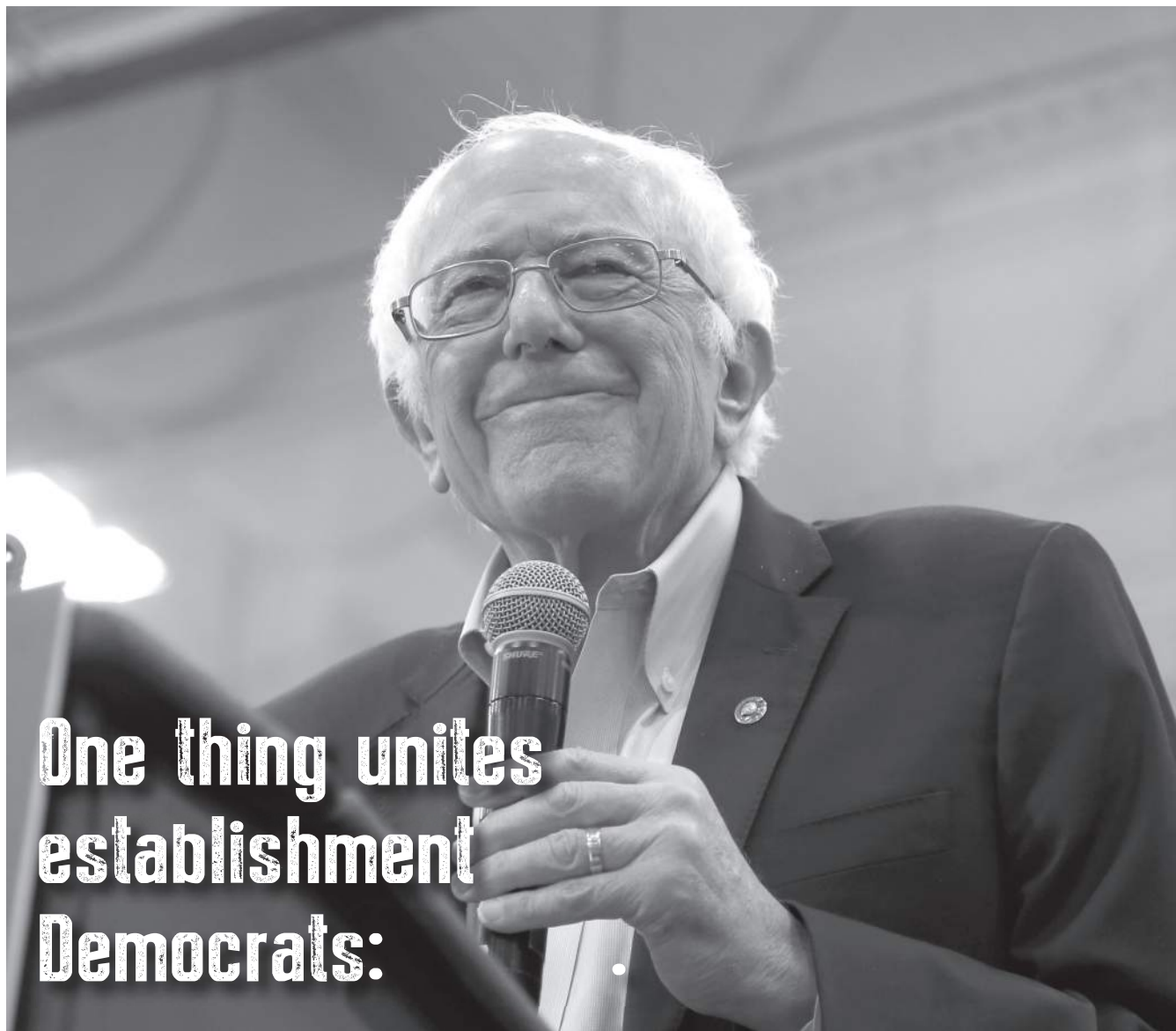
Critics of the Vermont senator, who has long identified as a democratic socialist, are further than they've ever been from unifying behind a moderate alternative. None of the viable centrists in the race is eager to exit the campaign to clear a path for a candidate to become a clear counter to Sanders. And Sanders is looking to Saturday's Nevada caucuses to post another win that would further his status as an early front-runner.

With fear and frustration rising in the party's establishment wing, a high-stakes math problem is emerging. It could be impossible to blunt Sanders as long as a trio of moderate candidates—former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, former Vice President Joe Biden and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar—stay in the race. And with former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into the swath of states that vote on Super Tuesday, March 3, the effort to stop Sanders will become even more challenging when the campaign goes national next month.

"You see this tremendous angst in the party — 'What are we going to do?'" said Terry McAuliffe, a former Virginia governor who was also chairman of the Democratic National Committee. "We need to unify as fast as we can."

The dynamic is complicated because each of the major moderate candidates has glaring vulnerabilities.

Biden began the campaign as a front-runner, but the aura around his operation took a hit after a fourth-place finish in Iowa gave way to a fifth-place finish in New Hampshire. Buttigieg has proved to be the most effective centrist in raising money from the party's traditional high-dollar donors, which puts him in a strong position to compete in an expensive national contest. But the 38-year-old faces lingering questions about his experience and his ability to win support from black and Latino voters,



One thing unites  
establishment  
Democrats:

Fear

of

Sanders

a challenge that could come into greater focus if Buttigieg loses badly in Nevada and South Carolina.

Klobuchar is newly emboldened after a third-place finish in New Hampshire, but she too has little support among minority voters and has largely run a bare-bones

campaign operation.

"When you have three or four candidates in that same lane, math becomes a problem," said Harold Schaitberger, general president of the International Association of Firefighters and a Biden loyalist, who admits being "disappointed" by Biden's bad performances and Sanders' rise.

Though the opening contests of the primary have only begun, time may quickly run out for a moderate alternative to emerge.

By the end of Super Tuesday, more than one third of all delegates will be awarded. Should Sanders build a significant delegate lead—and his

strength in California alone makes that possible—it would be very difficult for any other candidate to catch him in the slew of state-by-state elections that follow based on the way delegates are apportioned.

"We have a lot of good candidates, but in general we're incredibly frustrated that the field hasn't winnowed," said Robert Wolf, a major fundraiser for Barack Obama, who said he has donated money this cycle to more than a dozen Democrats. Sanders is not one of them.

The situation is similar to the Republican primary in 2016, when several anti-Trump alternatives divided their party's moderate vote and allowed Trump to become

Democratic critics and their allies to intensify their attacks in the coming weeks, although they suggest time may be on their side with Super Tuesday just two weeks away. If Sanders comes out of Super Tuesday with a 100-delegate lead, which is possible based on his popularity in California alone, they believe it would be virtually impossible for anyone to catch up before the party's national convention in July.

Sanders was showing new signs of confidence as he campaigned over the weekend in Nevada ahead of the state's caucuses next Saturday. Rallying supporters in Carson City on Sunday, he declared he could win Nevada, then California and the Democratic nomination and highlighted attempts from his rivals in both parties to stop him.

"I've been attacked by the media establishment, I've been attacked by the corporate establishment, I've been attacked by the Republican establishment, I've been attacked by the Democratic establishment, and they're nervous," Sanders said.

Sanders told The Associated Press last week that he was ramping up his outreach to other lawmakers and party officials who have been skeptical of his White House bid, although he offered no details. The senator has also agreed to host at least two

fundraisers for the Democratic National Committee, which he had previously resisted.

Asked about the response he was getting to the establishment outreach, Sanders said: "I think we're going to do just fine."

Yet as Sanders' strength grows in the early voting states, there is no evidence that his standing is improving among the party's skeptical political class. Several elected officials in recent days have raised concerns about his ability to beat Trump and his impact on other Democrats running for election this fall.

The competition for endorsements helps tell the story of the moderate muddle.

Since Biden's underwhelming finish in Iowa, Sanders hasn't received a single congressional endorsement. Buttigieg and Klobuchar, who have shown some strength on the campaign trail, have earned just one congressional endorsement each.

Over that same time, at least seven congressional endorsements have gone to Bloomberg, a 78-year-old former Republican who is threatening to become a top-tier candidate even after skipping all four February primary contests.

Steve Shurtleff, a Biden backer and the speaker of the New Hampshire House of Representatives, believes Buttigieg and Klobuchar are the new leaders in the party's moderate wing, while Bloomberg is making a case.

As for Sanders, Shurtleff noted that most New Hampshire voters supported somebody else. Indeed, Sanders won last week's primary with just 26% of the vote, a low bar made possible because his moderate alternatives split up the rest of the electorate.

"It's very crowded in that lane," Shurtleff said. "It's really kind of a conundrum."

Just don't ask any of Sanders' rivals to step aside.

An energized Klobuchar said in an interview that her third-place finish in New Hampshire left her "as scrappy as I was when I started."

She shrugged off any concerns about moderates dividing the vote. And she highlighted her strengths in Nevada, where she and Biden earned the endorsement of the state's largest newspaper and may benefit from the success of female candidates. Both of the state's U.S. senators are women and the state legislature is majority female.

"I don't think it's as simple as two lanes," she said in an interview. "Everyone brings something else to this."



## Overdrive



2020 Toyota Highlander

## AUTO REVIEW

# A vehicle sure to excite any parent: the 2020 Toyota Highlander

By LARRY PRINTZ  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**T**here are things in life you never notice, but they're there. And you realize that someone not only invented them, but made a handsome pile of money from it. Think of the zipper, the ballpoint pen or the paper clip—items designed out of frustration with the existing order.

Crossover SUVs are no different.

Until Toyota introduced the RAV4 and Highlander, SUVs used truck platforms, which were fine given their customers preferred off-roading. But as SUVs were increasingly purchased by consumers more interested in the SUV's image than its boulder-bashing capability, Toyota decided to use car platforms instead to deliver added refinement.

Making its debut in 2001, the Highlander set the pattern for a vehicle that now dominates the market: the crossover SUV. Now in its fourth generation, the 2020 Highlander continues to please with a new platform, and more energetic styling that's sleeker in appearance than its predecessor. It looks far better in person than in photos. But you may not notice, given how ubiquitous these vehicles are.

Most Highlanders come equipped with a 3.5-liter V-6 and an eight-speed automatic transmission that generates 295 horsepower and 263 pound-feet of torque. An optional towing package provides 5,000 pounds of towing capacity along with

a heavy-duty radiator with engine oil cooler, and Trailer Sway Control to help control trailer movement.

There's also a Highlander Hybrid, with a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine and two electric motors mated to a continuously variable transmission that generates 243 horsepower.

The Highlander is equipped with one of three all-wheel-drive systems. L, LE and XLE models get a system that sends 50% of available torque to the rear wheels when needed. Limited and Platinum model employ all-wheel drive to optimize handling under any condition, not just inclement weather. On hybrids, all-wheel drive comes from a separate rear-mounted electric motor that powers the rear wheels with no mechanical connection between the transmission and the rear wheels.

Choosing the hybrid nets stellar fuel economy, returning an EPA-rated 36 mpg in combined city/highway driving with front-wheel drive; 35 mpg with all-wheel drive. Yet even the V-6 is fairly frugal, returning 23 mpg with all-wheel drive, 24 mpg with front-wheel drive.

A Multi-Terrain Select dial adjusts the Highlander's response to road surface conditions. In addition, Hill Start Assist Control, Trailer Sway Control and Downhill Assist Control are optional to enhance off-road performance. Most importantly, Toyota Safety Sense 2.0, a suite of driver assistance safety systems, is standard and includes a pre-collision system with pedestrian detection, dynamic

radar cruise control, lane departure alert with steering assist, automatic high beam, lane tracing assist, and road sign assist.

Despite all of the technology, the Highlander's personality remains unchanged. Its smooth silent V-6 driveline coupled with a resilient ride delivers a comfortably quiet ride and a

more responsive or fun to drive, despite Toyota's insistence that switching drive modes affects accelerator, steering, and engine tuning. All models have the same suspension tuning, so any difference in driving feel comes from the tires. In the case of the top-of-the-line Platinum, it's markedly apparent, making that model far more satisfying to drive than other trim levels.

While driving, you'll find the infotainment touchscreen is easy for front seat passengers to reach, and its user interface is intuitive. Underneath it, a handy shelf makes the perfect place to stash a smartphone; the USB ports are underneath it, and accessible through a cord pass-through. The center console bin has a lid that roles back making it easy to access. While the base screen is more than adequate in size, the small knobs that control the audio functions are small and hard to grasp. The optional infotainment system's larger screen may seem indulgent, but far nicer to use. Its knobs are far bigger, and much easier to grasp, while the optional audio system delivers far better sound than the base system.

Apple Car Play, Android Auto, Alexa In-Car compatibility, Waze, SiriusXM, and Wi-Fi connectivity comes standard. If you want navigation, it's optional XLE and Limited and standard on Platinum. A 1,200 watt, 11-speaker JBL premium audio system is standard for Limited and Platinum grades.

Opting for the Platinum model

adds a number of small touches that make the Highlander far nicer. The top of the dashboard and doors has far more padding. The leather wrapped steering wheel is thicker and nicer to hold. The side of the center console is padded; on lesser grades it's simply hard plastic.

L and LE grades come with a second-row bench, while other models come with second row Captain's Chairs, although a second-row bench seat are available on XLE and Limited grades. With all seats in use, the Highlander offers 16 cubic feet of cargo space, opening up to 84.3 cubic feet with second and third rows folded.

Front seat comfort is sufficient on lower trims, and far better on upper-level models. Visibility is good all directions from the driver's seat. Second row seats are adequately high off the floor, and legroom is good. Both seats slide forward and back for people/cargo flexibility. That said, head room is claustrophobic with the sunroof, particularly for adults, as your stare into the ceiling mounted air vents. This is not an issue if you opt for the panoramic roof, as head room is good and the vents are mounted elsewhere. Third row seats are best left for rug rats, or folded.

Although vehicles like the 2020 Toyota Highlander crossover SUV elicits yawns from car cognoscenti, you'll find it to be practical, comfortable, safe and frugal with fuel. And while it won't excite enthusiasts, it will excite anyone who needs a stellar family hauler.

## NUTS &amp; BOLTS

## 2020 Toyota Highlander

- **Base price:** \$34,600
- **Engine:** DOHC 3.5-liter V6
- **Horsepower/Torque:** 295/263
- **EPA fuel economy (city/highway):** 20/27 mpg
- **Fuel required:** Regular
- **Wheelbase/Length/Width:** 112.2/194.9/76 inches
- **Ground clearance:** 8 inches
- **Cargo capacity:** 16-84.3 cubic feet
- **Towing capacity:** 3,500-5,000 pounds
- **Curb weight:** 4,145-4,595 pounds

serene environment. Yes, there's body lean in corners, and there is rebound over bumps, but that's to be expected.

The hybrid is remarkably efficient, returning 35 mpg without even trying—impressive for a car of this size. But the four-cylinder engine growls unpleasantly when pushed for grunt, sounding less refined than the regular gas driveline. And the CVT responds sluggishly at times, typical behavior for a CVT. The gas engine feels reluctant at times as well; putting it in sport mode doesn't make it any



## Life & Style

# Elton John, sick with pneumonia, cuts NZ show short

**AUCKLAND, New Zealand** (AP)—An emotional Elton John had to cut short a performance in New Zealand on Sunday after he lost his voice due to walking pneumonia and had to be assisted off stage.

John reached out to his fans on Instagram on Sunday, apologizing for ending his show at Auckland's Mt Smart Stadium early.

"I want to thank everyone who attended tonight's gig in Auckland. I was diagnosed with walking pneumonia earlier today, but I was determined to give you the best show humanly possible," he wrote. "I played and sang my heart out, until my voice could sing no more. I'm disappointed, deeply upset and sorry. I gave it all I had. Thank-you so

much for your extraordinary support and all the love you showed me during tonight's performance. I am eternally grateful. Love, Elton xx"

Video clips posted online by fans who were at the performance showed John breaking down in tears as he told the cheering crowd that he could not go on any longer.

The New Zealand Herald reported that John, 72, told his fans earlier that he had walking pneumonia and his voice was shot, but that he didn't want to miss the show. At one point, after performing "Someone Saved My Life Tonight," John slumped on his stool and required medical attention, the newspaper reported. But John recovered and continued to



play. Later, as he he attempted to sing "Daniel," he realized he had no voice left and was escorted off stage.

The concert was part of John's Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour. The tour lists addi-

tional performances at Auckland's Mt Smart Stadium on Tuesday and Thursday; there's no word on whether those shows will go on as scheduled.

John had just returned to New Zealand after perform-

ing at the Academy Awards in Los Angeles. He won an Oscar for best original song for his theme song for the movie "Rocketman."

According to the Mayo Clinic, walking pneumonia

is an informal term for a milder form of pneumonia that isn't severe enough to require hospitalization or bed rest. It affects the respiratory tract and is most often caused by bacteria.

## He's still standing: Elton John to finish New Zealand tour

**WELLINGTON, New Zealand** (AP)—Elton John intends to play his remaining shows in New Zealand this week, his tour promoters said Monday, a day after illness caused the singer to lose his voice and cut short a performance.

Video clips posted online by fans at Sunday night's performance showed John breaking down in tears as he told the cheering crowd he could not go on any longer. The 72-year-old singer said he had walking pneumonia and was assisted off stage.

Tour promoters Chugg Entertainment said John was resting and doctors are confident he will recover.

"Elton John was disappointed and deeply upset at having to end his Auckland concert early last night," the promoters' statement said. "At this stage, all remaining shows will go ahead as planned."

The concert was part of John's Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour. The tour lists performances at Auckland's Mt Smart Stadium on Tuesday and Thursday.

He thanked the concert attendees via an Instagram post and apologized for ending the show early.

"I want to thank everyone

who attended tonight's gig in Auckland. I was diagnosed with walking pneumonia earlier today, but I was determined to give you the best show humanly possible," John wrote. "I played and sang my heart out, until my voice could sing no more. I'm disappointed, deeply upset and sorry. I gave it all I had."

The New Zealand Herald reported that John told the crowd he was ill but that he didn't want to miss the show. He slumped on a stool and required medical attention after performing "Someone Saved My Life Tonight," but recovered and continued to play, the newspaper reported. Later, as he he attempted to sing "Daniel," he realized he had no voice left and was escorted off stage.

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## Loughlin, Giannulli: No college bribery trial until 2021

**BOSTON** (AP)—Lawyers for "Full House" actress Lori Loughlin, her fashion designer husband Mossimo Giannulli and other prominent parents charged in the sweeping college admissions bribery case say they won't be ready to go to trial until next year.

Federal prosecutors in Boston have said the first trial for the wealthy parents still fighting the charges should begin in October and that Loughlin and Giannulli should be tried

in the first group.

But the substantial amount of evidence, outstanding pre-trial motions and "general complexity" of the case make a trial this fall impossible, attorney Sean Berkowitz, who's representing Loughlin and Giannulli, said in a response filed Wednesday. The first trial should begin no sooner than next February, Berkowitz said.

The judge will ultimately decide when the trials will begin.

Prosecutors have provided

the defense with more than 1.9 million documents, consisting of more than 3.2 million pages, and more than 300 hours of audio and video, said Robert Popeo, an attorney for another parent charged in the case, media executive Elizabeth Kimmel.

Loughlin and Giannulli are accused of paying \$500,000 to get their daughters into the University of Southern California as crew recruits even though neither was a rower.

Authorities say the money was funneled through a sham charity operated by college admissions consultant Rick Singer, who has pleaded guilty to orchestrating the scheme.

Loughlin's lawyers have indicated they will argue that the couple believed their payments were legitimate donations and have accused prosecutors of hiding evidence that would support their claims of innocence while trying to bully them into pleading guilty.

## Reworked charges in Chicago cite another R. Kelly accuser

**CHICAGO** (AP)—An updated federal indictment against R. Kelly unsealed Friday in Chicago includes sex abuse allegations involving a new accuser, adding to the jailed singer's mounting legal challenges across three states.

The 13-count superseding indictment doesn't add more charges against Kelly. It includes multiple counts of child pornography and isn't substantially different from the original July indictment, which also had 13 counts.

What's new in the filing is a reference to an accuser called "Minor 6." But the indictment no longer includes any reference to a "Minor 2," meaning there are still a total of five alleged victims in the Chicago federal case.

The indictment offers few details about the new accuser.



It says she met Kelly around 1997 or 1998, when she would have been 14- or 15-years-old. It says Kelly engaged in sexual contact or sexual acts around that time and several years before she turned 18.

In a tweet later Friday, Kelly's lead attorney, Steve Greenberg, said, "We continue to fight for him and look for-

ward to the day he is free." He added the hashtag #notguilty.

Kelly, 53, will be arraigned under the reworked indictment. That could happen March 5, a date set previously for a status hearing. The trial date remains April 27, though that will likely be pushed to later this year.

It's unclear why Minor 2 no

longer appears to be on the prosecutors' list of alleged victims.

Kelly faces several dozen counts of state and federal sexual misconduct charges in Illinois, Minnesota and New York, from sexual assault to heading a racketeering scheme aimed at supplying Kelly with girls.

The Grammy Award-winner was jailed in July and has been awaiting trial at a Chicago federal jail a block from the courthouse where he attends pretrial hearings. He has participated in hearings in his New York case by video.

AP



# Rap impostors accused of scamming luxury hotels of thousands

ATLANTA (AP)—A crew of Rolls Royce-riding identity thieves who posed as rap industry figures scammed more than \$100,000 from some of the South's most exclusive hotels, prosecutors say.

The group told hotel workers they were with the entertainment firm Roc Nation, and listed the rap group Wu-Tang Clan with at least one of the hotels, according to a criminal complaint filed this week in U.S. District Court in Atlanta.

The Georgian Terrace Hotel in Atlanta—where cast members from

"Gone With The Wind" stayed during the film's Atlanta premiere—was left with a \$45,000 unpaid bill. Representatives of the Hyatt Regency Atlanta told the FBI the group walked away without paying its \$39,000 tab.

They had been driving a Roll Royce Phantom rented from A-National Limousine, which reported a loss of nearly \$60,000.

The group also used two Atlanta recording studios, which lost a total of more than \$17,000, the complaint states.

Walker Washington and Aaron

Barnes-Burpo are charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. Credit cards used in the scam included one that was stolen, and another that was likely fake, the complaint states.

The scam unraveled at a Fairfield Inn and Suites in Augusta, Georgia, where 10 rooms were booked, supposedly for an artist and his entourage. The reservation listed Roc Nation and the Wu Tang Clan, prosecutors said. But the staff suspected a scam, and the hotel sales director called Roc Nation and was told the

company was not associated with the men booking rooms.

After Barnes-Burpo tried to check in under the Roc Nation reservation, he and others with him were detained by Richmond County sheriff's deputies. Two others with the group told deputies they were homeless men from Atlanta who had been recruited by the defendants to be bodyguards. Others who traveled with them were not charged.

Court records do not list attorneys for the defendants who could be reached for comment on their behalf.

## Lizzo talks diversity, self-confidence and femininity

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Fresh from winning three Grammys, singer Lizzo visited Mexico City for a private concert, surprising her fans with acoustic versions of her hits and a toast with tequila.

The star from Detroit, who won best pop solo performance ("Truth Hurts"), best traditional R&B performance ("Jerome"), and best urban contemporary album for "Cuz I Love You," at the January awards show sat for an interview with The Associated Press. Lizzo spoke about diversity in the music industry, self-confidence and femininity and the disputes over the authorship of "Truth Hurts."

Answers have been edited for brevity and clarity.

**AP: Congratulations on your Grammys. There was a controversy about the lack of diversity at the awards this year. What would be an ideal version of the Grammys for you?**

**LIZZO:** There's always a lack of diversity, that's the issue in general. I don't think it's like "the 2020 Grammys lack diversity," it's like the industry lacks diversity. So, the world I would like to see, of course, has an even playfield: I think there are more women, more black people, more brown people, more people from other countries where you just don't put them in a foreign category, you put them in THE category. Someone like BTS. But I think that comes with just participation and using my privilege now as someone in the industry with a platform to just bring other people up.

**AP: From the Grammys you received, any that you were not expecting?**

**LIZZO:** I did not expect to win the first award of the night (best pop solo performance.) I thought Beyoncé was going to win, I really did. I was even going, 'Beyoncé, Beyoncé.' But I'm so grateful and it was a very special, powerful moment. Here's to more moments like that in the future.

**AP: I grew up watching pop stars that were blonde, super skinny, that looked perfect in every way. Then you come up and I'm grateful for that.**

**LIZZO:** I'm perfect, sis! Take that back! I think that even the blonde, thin pop stars, they have imperfections, but unfortunately the media portrays them as perfect, and I think that even those women struggle with having to live up to a body type or stereotype and probably suffer from a lot of depression. I am brown, I am black, I am curvy, and I am perfect and beautiful. And I think that we, as well as other people like Billie Eilish—I am completely different from her, but she is also rebelling against the archetype of the pop star. So, I'm glad you're grateful for me, but you also need to understand that I am just as perfect as they are. So are you.

## 'Sonic' speeds to \$57M debut; 'Parasite' sees big Oscar bump

NEW YORK (AP)—The redesigned "Sonic the Hedgehog" showed plenty of teeth at the box office, speeding to a \$57 million debut, according to studio estimates Sunday, while "Parasite" saw one of the largest post-Oscars bumps in years following its best picture win.

Paramount Pictures' "Sonic the Hedgehog" came in well above expectations, especially for a movie that just months ago was a laughing stock. After its first trailer was greeted with ridicule on social media last year, "Sonic" was postponed three months to give its title character a design overhaul—including fixing Sonic's eerily human teeth.

The makeover worked and audiences responded by making "Sonic the Hedgehog" the weekend's top film and the highest-grossing opening for a video game adaptation, not accounting for inflation. For Paramount, it's a welcome success following misfires such as "Gemini Man" and "Terminator: Dark Fate." The studio estimates "Sonic" will gross \$68 million over the four-day Presidents Day holiday weekend.

"If you don't listen to your customer, and this goes for any business, then you're going to fail," said Chris Aronson, distribution chief for Paramount. "We retooled Sonic in a way that was obviously very satisfying for the fans and they were very forgiving. Now that they've seen the movie, they love the movie. It all worked out."

The Sega video game adaptation, directed by Jeff Fowler, drew decent reviews (63% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and an A CinemaScore from moviegoers. The \$87 million production co-stars Jim Carrey as Dr. Robotnik with Ben Schwartz supplying Sonic's voice.

Bong Joon Ho's "Parasite" had its biggest weekend in its 19th



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Sonic, voiced by Ben Schwartz, in a scene from "Sonic the Hedgehog." AP

1. **"Sonic the Hedgehog,"** \$57 million (\$44.3 million international).
2. **"Harley Quinn: Birds of Prey,"** \$17.1 million (\$23 million international).
3. **"Fantasy Island,"** \$12.4 million (\$7.6 million international).
4. **"The Photograph,"** \$12.3 million.
5. **"Bad Boys for Life,"** \$11.3 million (\$11.1 million international).
6. **"1917,"** \$8.1 million (\$6.4 million international).
7. **"Jumanji: The Next Level,"** \$5.7 million (\$1.9 million international).
8. **"Parasite,"** \$5.5 million.
9. **"Dolittle,"** \$5.1 million (\$8.8 million international).
10. **"Downhill,"** \$4.7 million.

week of release. Neon put "Parasite" into its widest release yet (2,001 theaters) following its historic win at the Oscars. ("Parasite" was the first non-English-language film to win best picture in the 92-year history of the Academy Awards.) And despite the film already being available for weeks on digital platforms and on DVD, its

\$5.5 million weekend is the largest Oscars bump for a best-picture winner since "Gladiator" in 2001.

Last week's opening of "Birds of Prey" followed up its limp debut by sliding to second with \$17.1 million. Following its disappointing opening, some theaters retitled the movie "Harley Quinn: Birds of Prey," instead of "Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)."

It was a busy weekend in theaters, with a handful of other new releases—"The Photograph," "Fantasy Island," "Downhill"—seeking to capitalize on both Valentine's Day on Friday and Presidents Day on Monday.

"Fantasy Island," the Blumhouse horror remake of the '70s TV show, fared the best, collecting \$12.4 million in ticket sales despite terrible reviews. Sony Pictures handled the release of the low-budget, PG-13 film, which earned just a 9% fresh score on Rotten Tomatoes.

Universal Pictures "The Photograph," a romance starring Issa Rae and Lakeith Stanfield and produced

by Will Packer ("Girls Trip," "Ride Along"), opened with \$12.2 million. The film, written and directed by Stella Meghie, cost \$15 million to make.

"Downhill," from Disney's Fox Searchlight Pictures, debuted with \$4.7 million, a modest start for a film starring Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Will Ferrell. A remake of the acclaimed Swedish film "Force Majeure" by Ruben Östlund, "Downhill" didn't do great with critics but fared even worse with audiences. They gave it a D CinemaScore.

Neon followed up its "Parasite" Oscar win with the Valentine's Day release of "Portrait of a Lady on Fire," one of 2019's most acclaimed films. Following a one-week qualifying run in December, Celine Sciamma's French period romance opened in 22 theaters with a strong per-theater average of about \$20,000.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included.

## Boyfriend of British TV presenter heartbroken by her death

LONDON (AP)—The boyfriend of Caroline Flack, the former British TV host for the controversial reality show "Love Island," said Sunday that his "heart is broken" at her death as criticism mounted over her treatment by some British media.

British commercial television network ITV said it would not air Sunday's edition of the show but that it would return on Monday with a tribute to its former host.

Flack, 40, was found dead Saturday at her home in east London after taking her own life, according to

a family lawyer. Flack hosted "Love Island" from its launch in 2015 before stepping down in December after being charged with assaulting her 27-year-old boyfriend, Lewis Burton.

Flack denied the charge and was to stand trial next month. She was also not allowed to have any contact with Burton, a bail restriction he objected to. Burton also did not want Britain's Crown Prosecution Service to go ahead with the trial.

Over the past few months, Flack

had been the focus of several negative articles and was trolled across social media for the assault charge. On Sunday, the story of her suicide dominated the front pages of British newspapers.

Beside a picture of them together, Burton said on Instagram that he was in "so much pain."

He added: "I promise I will ask all the questions you wanted and I will get all the answers nothing will bring you back but I will try make you proud everyday."



Flack



# Banksy's Valentine's Day mural covered after it was defaced

**LONDON (AP)**—The family that owns a house in southwest England where an artwork from Banksy appeared in time for Valentine's Day has covered the mural after it was defaced.

Temporary fencing was also added Saturday to the home in Bristol and closed-circuit television has been installed to protect the artwork, which shows a young girl firing red flowers from a catapult.

The elusive artist confirmed the mural as his creation on his

official Instagram account on Feb. 14. It was later defaced with an expletive.

Kelly Woodruff, the daughter of Edwin Simons, who owns the rented home on which the artwork appeared, said the family felt a "strong responsibility" to ensure that the artwork could be enjoyed by the general public.

"Due to the mindless vandalism to the artwork, the family have taken the very difficult decision to cover the art-

work to try to protect it," she said. "All measures are temporary and we ask that the public are patient while we work out the best way to clean the damage, restore and protect it for the future, so everyone can enjoy Banksy's work."

**AP**  
A woman walks past a new artwork on the side of a house in Bristol, England, Thursday Feb. 13, 2020, which has been confirmed as the work of street artist Banksy.



## 'Parasite' director Bong greeted by applause in South Korea

**INCHEON, South Korea (AP)**—Director Bong Joon-ho smiled and waved at a waiting crowd on Sunday as he arrived home in South Korea, his first trip back since he won four Oscars for his movie "Parasite," including the award for Best Picture.

The crowd clapped and cheered as Bong walked out of the arrivals gate at Incheon International Airport.

"It's been a long journey in the United States and I'm

pleased that it got wrapped up nicely," Bong said, speaking in Korean. "Now, I am happy that I can quietly return to creating, which is my main occupation."

He also joked that he would wash his hands to join the movement to defeat a new virus that has sickened tens of thousands, mostly in China.

"I'll diligently wash my hands from now on and participate in this movement to defeat coronavirus," he said. As

of Sunday, South Korea had 29 confirmed cases of the new virus, which the World Health Organization has named COVID-19, referring to its origin late last year and the coronavirus that causes it.

"Parasite" was the first non-English-language film to win Best Picture in the 92-year history of the Academy Awards, and is the first South Korean movie to ever win an Oscar, stunning moviemakers and fans around the world.



South Korean director Bong Joon-ho arrives at the Incheon International Airport in Incheon, South Korea, Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020.

## DA deciding whether to investigate James Brown's death

**ATLANTA (AP)**—A prosecutor in Atlanta will decide whether to open a formal investigation after meeting with a woman who says she has evidence legendary singer James Brown's death was caused by another person, his spokesman said.

Brown, known as the Godfather of Soul, was 73 when

he died of heart failure on Christmas day in 2006 in Atlanta, less than two days after being hospitalized for treatment of pneumonia.

A woman named Jacque Hollander contacted Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard's office to request a meeting, claiming Brown's death was caused

by another person, according to the prosecutor's spokesman Chris Hopper. Howard met with Hollander on Wednesday and accepted a bin of materials she said related to Brown's death.

Howard will look at the materials Hollander brought and will decide whether to open an investigation, Hopper said.

## Bieber says fear led him to stay away from music

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Justin Bieber admits getting back in the studio to record his first album in five years wasn't easy.

"I was dealing with a lot of fear," the singer told Zane Lowe in an interview with Apple Music, to be released on Saturday. "Just was afraid of, at that point, just even the process; what am I going to talk about again, is it gonna be received. I'm starting to compare with other artists."

Bieber releases his first al-

bum of new music since 2015 on Friday with "Changes," the follow-up to his Grammy-winning, multiplatinum album "Purpose." While he married Hailey Baldwin last year, Bieber has also talked about enduring several challenges in the past few years, including dealing with depression, recovering from past drug use and contracting Lyme disease, which he says seriously affected his health.

Bieber says it wasn't until he performed on stage with

Ariana Grande last year at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival and received an ovation that he got a "boost of confidence."

"It kind of reminded me ... this is what I do, this is what I'm good at, and I don't need to run away from it," he said.

He said: "When something's hard, it's almost like we need to run towards the pain and run toward the hurt rather than run away from it. I think you get kind of healing when it comes to that."

## Woman is pressured to tell friend of husband's flirting

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been friends with "Caroline" for more than 20 years. Her husband is present when they visit us because they live out of state, and when I visit her, he is there. I have been married for 28 years, and my husband doesn't join me when I visit Caroline.

Caroline travels worldwide for work. Her husband has family near me. One time, when he was in town and she was traveling, I invited him to meet me for dinner. He got the wrong idea and thought it was a date behind his wife's back. She knew we were having dinner, but I never revealed to her that he made a pass at me that evening. I corrected him, explained I wasn't trying to start a romance and emphasized I would never do that to my friend.

When I got home that night, my husband asked how dinner went, and I shared what happened. He took it personally. He felt disrespected and told me to tell Caroline. Others I have spoken to about this said don't say anything. This happened a year or two ago.

My husband and I are now invited to the wedding of Caroline's stepdaughter. My husband refuses to go because of what happened. He insists I should tell Caroline and explain why he isn't coming.

I have no feelings whatsoever for her husband and would never engage in anything with him. Their marriage is already rocky. Both have had extramarital affairs, and he said he planned to divorce her last year but hasn't. Should I tell Caroline what happened?

COVERING UP

**DEAR COVERING:** I see nothing positive to be gained by telling Caroline at this late date. It's ancient history. Caroline already knows that her husband has cheated in the past. I do not think it would be helpful to rock the boat.

**DEAR ABBY:** This is a delicate subject for me, one I've never been faced with before. I have been speaking to a really nice guy I met online, and after many weeks of talking, we decided to meet up. It wasn't anyplace special or expensive; it was a lunch spot. I wore jeans and new shoes, and did my hair to look nice for him. We had a pleasant lunch, which he insisted on paying for.

Abby, in his pictures, he is very handsome. In most of them he was well-dressed and -kept. He showed up in a knit ski hat that covered nearly his whole head, and the rest of his attire was wrinkled and sloppy. It was not what I expected for our first date that we had been talking about for a long time.

I'm thinking I may be disappointed because I may have built up expectations in my head. We are talking about a second date, and I'd like to give him another chance to crisp himself up, but I would like to handle it delicately so as not to hurt his feelings. I never thought of myself as judgmental. Am I being unreasonable for wishing my new boyfriend wants to look good for me as I do for him? How do I handle this?

SECOND THOUGHTS

## DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



**DEAR SECOND THOUGHTS:** Here's how. Recognize that he is not your "new boyfriend"; he is only a candidate for the "job." Go out with him a few more times and get to know him well enough that you can have an honest conversation with him. If he doesn't shape up, at that point, tell him what you told me. Leave out the part about blaming yourself for your feelings. They are honest, and you are entitled to them, and frankly, you might be doing him a favor to speak up.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

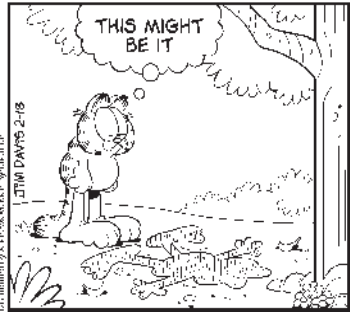
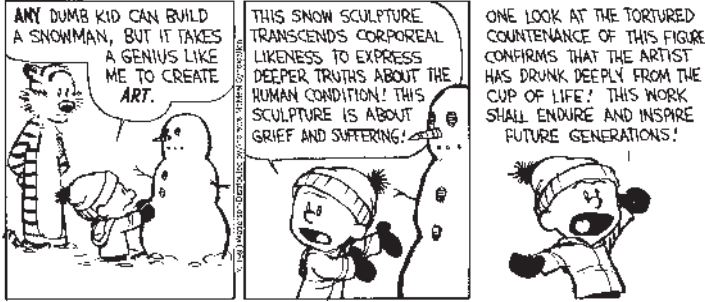


Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

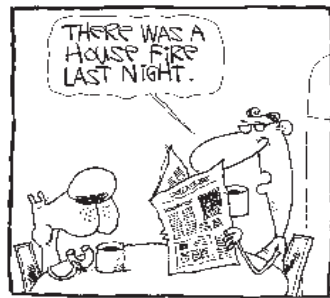
Garfield® By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Eric of "Troy"

5 Dance club VIPs

8 Prima donna

12 Exploits

13 Boring routine

14 Stretches (out)

15 Capital of Virginia

17 Beholds

18 Tibetan beast

19 Fine, to NASA

20 Brainy

21 Zero

22 Life story

23 Major exam

26 Largest planet

30 God of war

31 Joke

32 Handle

33 Soaking spot

35 Judean king

36 Cistern

37 "— Kapital"

DOWN

1 Conceal, in a way

2 China setting

3 Bottle part

4 Bonfire residue

5 Slobber

6 Rubbish

7 Norm (Abbr.)

8 Capital of Iowa

9 Furniture brand

10 Swerve

11 Admin. aide

16 Postal delivery

20 Small taste

21 Capital of Tennessee

22 Glitch

23 "Terrif!" acronym

24 Nest egg

25 Bottom line

26 Poke

27 Sailor

28 Punk-rock subgenre

29 Roulette bet

31 Belly

34 Body art, for short

35 Saintry ring

37 "Skyfall" actress

38 Shopping center

39 Online auction site

40 Enlist again

41 "— Lisa"

42 Hefty horn

43 Mr. Guinness

44 Chums

46 That girl

47 Napkin's place

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-18

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shane Lyons, 32; Molly Ringwald, 52; John Travolta, 66; Yoko Ono, 87.

Happy Birthday: Stabilizing your life and positioning yourself for success should be your priorities. Use your intuition and intelligence to sort out the best path to take, and start moving forward. Discarding what you no longer need in your life will help you stay focused on what's important and ensure that you don't let your emotions keep you from reaching your objective. Your numbers are 7, 12, 22, 27, 33, 39, 48.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Share less in order to minimize opposition. You'll accomplish the most if you work alone. Adequately prepare before you present your objective. Launching your plans too soon will lead to criticism or theft. Protect your pursuits, passwords and reputation. \*\*

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Share information, assess situations and explore possibilities. Your dedication to pursue something you feel passionate about will bring satisfying results that promote positive change. Continue to grow emotionally and intellectually, and recognition for your accomplishments will be yours. \*\*\*\*

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't waste time on trivial matters or people who are misleading or playing games with you. A geographical change will inspire you to try something new or to revisit a dream you have yet to fulfill. Don't fold under pressure. \*\*\*

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A change will enhance your personal life. Conversations will lead to decisions that will

change your life. A partnership will complement what you are trying to achieve. Expand your knowledge, and update your skills. Live in the moment. \*\*\*

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Consider what you want. A personal change should be your priority. Let go of anything or anyone holding you back. It's time to venture down a path that leads to something you want. Your happiness is up to you. Romance is encouraged. \*\*\*

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Enjoy what life has to offer, and be willing to embrace the changes that come your way. It's time to start something new, but first, complete anything you've left undone. The result of purging and forging ahead will be gratifying. \*\*\*\*

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Stay out of the line of fire. Someone will try to disrupt your life if you are too accommodating or willing to put up with unreasonable demands. Look inward, and make personal growth your priority. Learn from experience. \*\*

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Mingle with people who have a sharp, imaginative mind; good ideas will push you in a new direction. Mix creativity with ambition and drive, and you will find a way to up your game and use your skills to prosper. \*\*\*\*

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Control your emotions. Don't let anyone know how you feel if you want to remain in control. Spend time on self-improvement and boosting your confidence, not putting up with people who are critical or demeaning. \*\*\*

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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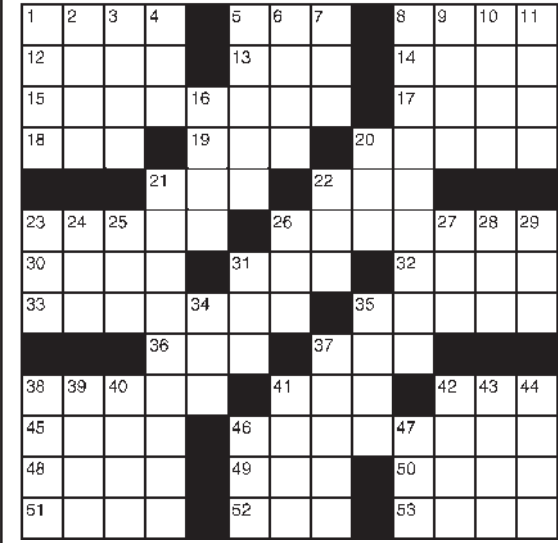
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): A healthy attitude coupled with discipline and a good work ethic will lead to a better lifestyle. Physical fitness and proper diet should be priorities. Be open to suggestions, but do only what you feel is in your best interest. \*\*\*

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Relax, and take a moment to review what's come and gone. Consider what you want and what you are willing to give. Draw the line between helping because you want to and being taken advantage of because you are too kind. \*\*\*

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Reach out to someone who needs a helping hand. Your input will make a difference and encourage a promotion or a boost to your reputation. Someone from your past will offer information that will lead to a unique opportunity. \*\*\*\*

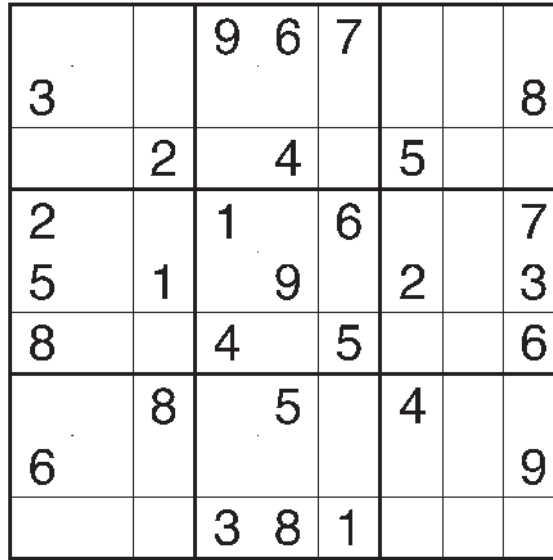
Birthday Baby: You are perceptive, humorous and diligent. You are determined and loyal.

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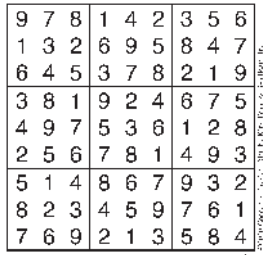
SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green



Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level \*\* 2/18 ©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SPEECH THERAPISTS Solution: 9 letters


N E T A C I N U M M O C L B P  
E E V O C Y W R I T E L O R A  
T Y R A N O C Y P O C I O A T  
S R E D L G U N S Y I N H I H  
I O D M L U U S E L O I C N O  
L M L A U I A E T U V C S O L  
A E W A E L H T N I L O E I O  
I M O T O R O C E E C F G T Y  
C E L A B R E V T I B N A I Y  
A N L T A E R T A S L O U N I  
F T A P S P E L L S E I G G N  
E O W I L R E S K U A S N O J  
E R S T T R E P X E R E A C U  
D S S C I T S I U G N I L C R  
P L E H E A R L I T E R A C Y

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Acoustic, Brain, Cases, Children, Clinic, Cognition, Communicate, Copy, Evaluate, Expert, Facial, Feed, Fluency, Hear, Help, Injury, Issue, Language, Learn, Letter, Linguistics, Lips, Listen, Literacy, Memory, Mentor, Motor, Noise, Pathology, Pitch, Pronounce, Read, School, Social, Spell, Swallow, Talk, Tongue, Treat, Verbal, Voice, Volume, Write  
Yesterday's Answer: Blazing  
To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 37 through 51, order online at [www.WonderWordBooks.com](http://www.WonderWordBooks.com).

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP20-JUDICIARY-02**

**SUBMISSION DATE: February 26, 2020 TIME: 3:00 P.M.**

**“WINDOW REPAIR”**

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**THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.**

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ **ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO**  
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/ **JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ**  
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER



**NORTHERN MARIANAS  
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“RE-ANNOUNCEMENT”**

**OPENING DATE: February 18, 2020 CLOSING DATE: March 05, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

NMHC JVA No.	Positions:	Salary:
2020-001	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	UNGRADED \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00-per annum
2020-003	CDBG-DR Compliance Manager	UNGRADED \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00-per annum

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. You may also access the application online at [www.nmhcgov.net](http://www.nmhcgov.net).

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447or by email to [officemanager@nmhcgov.net](mailto:officemanager@nmhcgov.net). NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/  
**JESSE S. PALACIOS**  
Corporate Director

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  - 5-Liner

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.



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# Close win for Team LeBron against Team Giannis

**ALL-STAR 2020** CHICAGO  
(A P) — Players

were taking charges, bodies were hitting the floor, calls and non-calls were being screamed about on both ends. The fourth quarter of the NBA All-Star Game was as intense as the final moments of a playoff game, the biggest stars in the league holding absolutely nothing back.

And in the end, Anthony Davis was a hometown hero by making a free throw.

Kobe Bryant—ever the competitor—would have simply loved the way this night went.

“That was pretty damn fun,” a sweat-soaked, exhausted LeBron James said at the end.

Davis made a game-ending free throw to give Team LeBron a 157-155 win over Team Giannis in the revamped NBA All-Star Game on Sunday night, the format overhauled to put in elements for charity and ensure that someone was going to hit a shot to end the game.

That someone was Davis, the Chicago native who missed the first free throw and made the second to end the NBA’s midseason showcase that went down as the closest All-Star Game since the Eastern Conference topped the Western Conference 141-139 in 2010.

Kawhi Leonard, the game’s MVP, scored 30 points for Team LeBron, while James—his team’s captain—and Chris Paul each scored 23, and Davis finished with 20. Giannis Antetokounmpo, who captained his team, led his squad with 25 points, Kemba Walker had 23 for Team Giannis, Joel



LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers dunks during the second half of the NBA All-Star basketball game Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020, in Chicago.

Embiid scored 22 and Rudy Gobert added 21.

The finish was frantic, and then some. James tried a layup that would have put his team one point away—it was blocked by Antetokounmpo, called a goaltend at first but ruled a clean block after review. Team LeBron controlled the resulting jump ball and James tried a 40-footer to end it but missed.

Harden had a chance to win it, and his 3-pointer went in -- but it was waved off by Kyle

Lowry taking a charge against the NBA’s scoring leader. James got a dunk to make it 156-153, and Embiid made two free throws to cut Team LeBron’s lead to one.

But Davis was fouled on the next trip, got the free throw to win it, and that was that.

“I told my team I was going to miss the first one to put a little more pressure on myself here at home,” Davis said.

James’ team wore blue jerseys, all with the No. 2 for Gianna Bryant. Antetok-

ounmpo’s team wore red, every player wearing No. 24 on the back for Kobe Bryant. And on their right shoulders was a black circular patch with nine stars, one for each victim of the helicopter crash that took the lives of Bryant, his daughter and their seven friends on Jan. 26.

“His presence was felt,” James said.

And with the new rules, they went at it in the fourth: Antetokounmpo got out to block a shot by James, Lowry

took a charge from his former Toronto teammate in Leonard, elbows got up in collisions for rebound positioning, Chris Paul was screaming encouragement to Team LeBron teammates in a time-out—all adding up to an intensity hardly ever seen in All-Star Games.

It was the first All-Star Game with a new format: The teams played a mini-game in each of the first three quarters, the scores starting at 0-0 in each of those peri-

ods and the winning team in each one earning \$100,000 for their Chicago-area children’s charity.

Team LeBron played for Chicago Scholars. Team Giannis played for After School Matters. James’ team won the first quarter 53-41, Antetokounmpo’s team won the second quarter 51-30.

The third quarter had down-to-the-wire, big-money drama. Nikola Jokic hit a 3-pointer with 22.2 seconds left to give Team LeBron a 40-39 lead, prompting Team Giannis coach Nick Nurse of the NBA champion Toronto Raptors to call time -- with the quarter win and \$100,000 on the line.

But Team Giannis promptly turned the ball over, and Russell Westbrook made one of two free throws to push the Team LeBron lead to two. Trae Young then found Rudy Gobert for a dunk for Team Giannis with 2.2 seconds left, knotting the quarter score at 41-41. Westbrook missed a runner at the buzzer, and that \$100,000 carried over to the fourth—putting \$300,000 in all at stake in the final period.

The cumulative score at that point was Team Giannis 133, Team LeBron 124 going into the untimed fourth quarter—with another new twist. The NBA decided, as part of the series of Bryant tributes, that the winner of the All-Star Game would be the team that added 24 points, a nod to his jersey number, to whatever the leading total score was after three quarters.

That meant the target score was set: 157. The game clock was off. The shot clock stayed on. And the stage for drama was perfectly set.

## All-Star weekend, as expected, was about honoring Kobe

CHICAGO (AP)—It has become one of the NBA’s most revered traditions: On the morning of the NBA All-Star Game, the league pays tribute to retired players with what is called the Legends Brunch. It brings together about 3,000 guests, and every year a recent retiree with ties to the game’s host city is honored.

When the game was in Los Angeles two years ago, the NBA wanted to honor Kobe Bryant.

He declined. He couldn’t attend. His reason: his daughter Gianna Bryant had a game that morning.

“That said, to us, everything about his priorities,” NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said Sunday as he recalled that conversation with Bryant.

This All-Star weekend was Michael Jordan’s long-time home of Chicago, highlighted by a game where

LeBron James and Giannis Antetokounmpo served as captains — but it was, predictably and understandably, overshadowed by the mourning of Bryant.

Jennifer Hudson, wearing the Lakers’ deep purple, performed a pregame tribute to Bryant and sang “For All We Know.” Players on James’ team wore Gianna’s No. 2 on their jerseys and players on Antetokounmpo’s team wore Kobe’s No. 24 on theirs. And all players wore a patch with nine stars, one for each victim of the crash.

Common, in his pregame tribute to Chicago, also paid homage to Bryant, saying that “even in the darkest times, you’ll feel Kobe’s light.”

Everyone at the All-Star Game on Sunday got a 24-page tribute published by Sports Illustrated devoted to Bryant’s career. On the last

page of text, just before the back cover, was a quote from Jordan: “I loved Kobe—he was like a little brother to me,” it began. Next to that quote was a photo, Bryant guarding Jordan in 1997, sticking his tongue out much in the same way that the Bulls’ guard often did.

And when the night was over, Kawhi Leonard was the first recipient of the Kobe Bryant MVP Award, given to the player voted as the biggest star of the All-Star Game—a trophy that Bryant hoisted four times.

It’s been three weeks now since Bryant, 13-year-old Gianna and seven others were killed in a helicopter crash in Southern California.

And the mourning period is still very active, very real, very necessary.

It’s a doubly somber time for the NBA, since the

league is also coming to grips with the Jan. 1 death of Commissioner Emeritus David Stern—the person credited for taking a fledgling league and turning it into one of the planet’s most powerful sports brands, a multi-billion-dollar entity with a reach that touches nearly every outpost on earth. Stern was remembered as well at the Legends Brunch, and Silver drew a parallel between Bryant and his former boss.

“Just as a reminder: Who more embodies the spirit of All-Star than Kobe? ... He always played hard. He didn’t care if it was an All-Star game,” Silver said. “And I think that’s what he and David had in common. They always competed. They believed in the power of sports. They believed in winning and they believed it was necessary

to always give their all. And I think that’s why their losses have resonated with so many people around the world.”

Magic Johnson—like Bryant, a Los Angeles Lakers legend—had been hired two years ago to introduce Bryant at the Legends Brunch, the one that Bryant couldn’t attend because his daughter had a game that morning.

On Sunday, Johnson finally got his chance to speak at the event and pay tribute to Bryant. He told the story about how, before Bryant was drafted in 1996, Jerry West called him to say that he had seen the greatest draft workout that he could recall.

He was speaking of Bryant’s workout.

“And I said, ‘Really,’” said Johnson, who also paid tribute to Stern and Bryant at United Center before Sunday’s game by addressing fans. “He said, ‘Yes, this guy named Kobe Bryant. Just was incredible

in his workout and we’re going to do everything we can to draft him.”

The rest is history. Bryant came to the Lakers in a draft-night trade and played there for 20 years, winning five titles. Johnson said he was quickly impressed with Bryant’s work ethic, how he would work for two hours before practice and then go through another two-hour session with the team.

“That’s who Kobe Bryant was,” Johnson said. “He was always thinking about ‘How can I get better? How can I lead my team to victory?’ And when you think about him scoring 81 points in a game, only second to Wilt Chamberlain, and then five NBA championships, and then to score 60 points in his last game—that was probably the greatest thing I’ve ever seen from any athlete. He said, ‘Hey, I’m going to go out Mamba-style.’”



# Manfred: No tolerance for beanballs



**N O R T H  
P O R T, Fla.**  
(AP)—With

baseball ablaze over the Houston Astros' cheating scandal, commissioner Rob Manfred met with nearly half of the major leagues managers Sunday and told them to knock off any notion of get-even beanballs.

"I hope that I made it extremely clear to them that retaliation in-game by throwing at a batter intentionally will not be tolerated, whether it's Houston or anybody else," Manfred said. "It's dangerous and it is not helpful to the current situation."

Cody Bellinger, Kris Bryant, Trevor Bauer and Carlos Correa were among the All-Stars recently trading threats, accusations and barbs as spring training opened. The revelation of Houston's sign-stealing scam, the punishment imposed by Major League Baseball and poorly received apologies by the Astros further enhanced anger across the sport, with players, club management and fans all joining in.

"I think that the back and forth that's gone on is not healthy," Manfred said.

Manfred had previously planned to attend a news conference at the Atlanta Braves' new camp, along with managers and representatives of teams training in Florida to talk about the upcoming season. Instead of an uplifting look at the upcoming season, as this annual press session is, there was no doubt what was the No. 1 topic.

Manfred said he would personally talk to the managers of the teams that train in Arizona on Tuesday.

In further fallout from the Astros' scheme, Manfred said the investigation into the Boston Red Sox could be completed within two weeks. He also said he planned to meet the players' union to discuss new rules limiting in-game video access.

"I do expect that we will for 2020 have really serious restrictions on player and playing personnel access to video in-game," Manfred said. "I think it's really important for us to send a message to our fans that not only did we investigate and punish, but we altered our policies in a way that will help make sure it doesn't happen again."

Manfred said MLB officials discussed the possibility of vacating the Astros' 2017 World Series championship.

"First of all, it had never happened in baseball," Manfred said. "I am a precedent guy. The 2017 World Series will always be looked at as dif-



ferent, whether not you put an asterisk or ask for the trophy back. Once you go down that road as for changing the result on the field, I just don't know

where you stop."

Astros players were granted immunity for taking part in the investigation but Manfred said that "if I was in a world where

I could have found the facts without granting immunity, I would have done that."

"They had an obligation to play by the rules and they

didn't," Manfred said. "I understand when say the players should have been punished."

Manfred said expanding the MLB playoff format is being

## *Darvish: Astros should be stripped of title*

**MESA, Ariz.** (AP)—Yu Darvish got hit hard by the Houston Astros during the 2017 World Series—both his ERA and reputation took quite a beating.

On Sunday, after a bullpen session for the Chicago Cubs, he sought to settle the score a bit. He said the Astros, their sign-stealing scheme exposed, should be stripped of their title.

"Like the Olympics, when a player cheats, they can't have a gold medal," the Japanese-born star said. "But (Houston) still has a World Series title. It does make me feel weird. That's it."

The 33-year-old pitcher became the latest player to criticize the Astros. But Darvish said he wasn't actually "angry" about the sign-stealing scandal that resulted managers AJ Hinch, Alex Cora and Carlos Beltran losing their jobs.

Pitching for the Los Angeles Dodgers, Darvish lasted only 1 1/3 innings in both of his 2017 World Series appearances. He was tagged for four runs and six hits in Game 3 at Minute Maid Park in Houston, then the four-time All-Star lost Game 7 at Dodger Stadium.

Darvish wound up with a 21.60 ERA in his two starts. The poor results led many to question whether Darvish was tipping his pitches, or not up to the challenge or just wasn't very sharp.

"I know they were stealing signs, but at the same time, I was not good during the World Series," Darvish said. "I'm better for what I went through. But, yeah, everyone is wondering about (their numbers) pitching against them."

Darvish also referenced the back and forth between former Dodgers teammate Cody Bellinger, the reigning NL MVP, and Astros star Carlos Correa. Darvish said the Astros should be more "apologetic."

"So they cheat, I think, right now, they don't have to talk. They shouldn't talk like that," Darvish said.

He said he's been getting harassed on Twitter by Astros fans posting images of the racist gesture Yuli Gurriel made at Darvish after homering off him in Game 3. Major League Baseball suspended Gurriel for the first five games of the 2018 season.

Darvish was 6-8 with a 3.98 ERA in 31 starts for the

Cubs last year. He's going into third season of a six-year, \$126 million contract.

Meanwhile, be it on a Triple-A field in Syracuse or a tennis court in South Asia, Tim Tebow is still working, hoping for a shot at the majors.

Now 32, the former celebrated quarterback is back for his fifth year as a minor league outfielder for the New York Mets.

A two-time national champion at Florida who won the Heisman Trophy and later a playoff-winning QB for the Denver Broncos, Tebow was contacted by the XFL in its return to football action this season. He said he loves the opportunity the league is giving to players who will eventually, he feels, make an NFL roster.

"But for me, this is what I wanted to do and pursue it and be all-in. When I'm 50, I can't come back and do this," Tebow said Sunday at the Mets' spring training complex. "This is part of a season and a time, and I feel I'm in that season. I don't know when I'll feel like I'm out."

Tebow's steady dedication has resulted in some odd workout locations, includ-

ing one in the Maldives last month with his wife, Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, a South African who was crowned Miss Universe in 2017.

The couple wedded on Jan. 20 in Franschhoek, South Africa, and honeymooned and participated in Tebow's Night to Shine program internationally. While in Maldives on his honeymoon, Tebow got in some baseball work.

"(The Maldives) doesn't have baseball cages there, but they do have a really sweet tennis court. I was able to get soft-toss against the back of the tennis net," said Tebow, who sent footage out on social media. "People were like, 'Dude, just stop.'"

"Our trip was so fast in the Vatican that I was thinking, 'It would be kind of cool if I ran up the Vatican steps like Rocky,' but I didn't," he said, laughing.

For the second consecutive year, his season ended with an injury in July. In 2018 it was surgery on the hamate bone in his right hand. Last season he attempted to field a ball hit to him with his bare left hand, resulting in eight stitches and the end of another campaign.

<sup>AP</sup>  
Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred takes questions about the Houston Astros during a news conference at the Atlanta Braves' spring training facility Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020, in North Port, Fla.

discussed internally but that no decision has been reached.

Baker accepts that no one is moving on from scandal

Houston Astros manager Dusty Baker has gone from hoping aloud that fallout from his new team's sign-stealing scandal would go away quickly to accepting that the back-and-forth is lingering.

"You realize it's going to take a while to move on. You don't just move on, just 'cause you say, 'Move on.' We do realize that sometimes the guys have something to say. Sometimes you guys have a job to do," Baker told reporters Sunday at spring training. "Everything heals in time, and I'm just hoping that the time to heal has come and gone."

Then he added: "Probably not, but I hope so."

This comes 72 hours after Houston's poorly received news conference and attempts to apologize, when Baker said, "We're hoping that we don't have to continue to answer these questions, and hopefully we can get the season started because it has been a distraction."

He said Sunday, he was fine with Astros shortstop Carlos Correa's vociferous defense on Saturday of teammate Jose Altuve and rejoinder to players from other teams—a group that included reigning NL MVP Cody Bellinger of the Los Angeles Dodgers and catcher Kurt Suzuki of the Washington Nationals, who beat Houston in the 2019 World Series.

Suzuki, for one, made clear Sunday he is ready to move on from the whole deal, joking: "Honestly, I'm too old to get in the middle."

"I really don't associate myself with this kind of stuff," said the 36-year-old Suzuki, whose team shares a spring training complex with the Astros. "I just kind of go about my business and try to stay out of everything and get ready to play baseball."

The Nationals have said they got ready for the Fall Classic in October under the assumption the Astros were cheating; a Major League Baseball investigation released last month said Houston used video feeds to steal opposing catchers' signs in 2017 and 2018.

Part of the fallout was that Astros manager AJ Hinch and GM Jeff Luhnow were fired.



# Scott wins at Riviera and this time it counts

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Adam Scott contemplated the safe shot to get him out of his mess on the 15th hole at Riviera, knowing it would probably cost him his two-shot lead but not yet the tournament.

On a Sunday filled with big blunders and untimely mistakes, Scott changed his mind.

"I thought, 'Well, you can maybe win the tournament if you hit a great flop shot here.' So I thought I might as well go for it," Scott said after his two-shot victory in the Genesis Invitational, this one that counts in the record book.

The flop shot to 5 feet allowed him to escape with bogey. Two holes later, he ran in a 10-foot birdie putt for a two-shot cushion and carried that to a 1-under 70 and a win that felt overdue.

Scott won the Australian PGA two months ago and hadn't played since then. Still, it had been nearly four years since his last PGA Tour victory. That changed at Riviera, his favorite course, on a final day so tough no shot shot better than 68.

Scott made clutch putts for birdie, par and bogey. But it was that decision—and the shot—that stood out.

"I had a little bit of that kind of mindset, not just today but the whole week, of 'what have I got to lose?' ... Give myself a good chance to get back in the winner's circle on the PGA Tour," he said.

The victory comes 15 years after Scott won a playoff at Riviera that didn't count as official because rain shortened the tournament to 36 holes. He earned every bit of this victory, his 14th on the PGA Tour and 29th worldwide.

So tense was Sunday that nearly a dozen players had a chance to win. Five players had a share of the least at some point.

The list included Rory McIlroy, who never recovered from a triple bogey; Harold Varner III, who chunked his 3-wood off the 10th tee so badly that the shot traveled 129 yards and led to double bogey. Matt Kuchar went 15 holes with three bogeys and no birdies to fall behind.

"Honestly, I didn't expect it to be as difficult as it was, but everyone



AP  
Adam Scott of Australia hits his third shot on the 11th hole during the final round of the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club, Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020, in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles.

was finding it tough out there," McIlroy said after a 73 that left him in a tie for fifth, but still No. 1 in the world. "Adam held on well at the end."

Tied for the lead early in the final round, the new world No. 1 caught a flier from the left rough on the par-4 fifth hole. Instead of landing his ball on the front third of the green, his

second shot from 162 yards pitched about pin high and rolled off the back of the green, into a shaved collection area.

"Obviously not the place you want to leave yourself," he said.

It was the mistake that cost McIlroy the tournament.

With little green to work with, he tried to bump his chip shot into the

hill in front of him. But he caught the chip a groove low on the clubface, and his ball expired into the hill and rolled back toward him.

Tiger Woods had his problems, too, but he was never in contention.

Woods played a five-hole stretch late in his round at 5 over and shot 77 to finish last among the 68 players who made the cut. It was the first time Woods has finished last alone

since the Memorial in 2015.

"Good news, I hit every ball forward, not backwards, a couple sideways," Woods said.

The final round became wide open after the fifth hole when Scott and McIlroy hit shots that bounced over the green and across a series of swales. McIlroy tried to bump a shot into the hill and it came up short and rolled back. He flopped the next one about 20 feet away and three-putted for triple bogey.

On the par-3 sixth, he hit it on the wrong side of the bunker in the middle of the green and dropped another shot.

Scott tried a flop behind the fifth green that came up short. He went to his long putter, barely got it up the hill and onto the green and made double bogey. The difference was the next hole. He made an 18-foot birdie above the hole.

"It's not time to get flustered and try something new on the sixth hole of the final round," Scott said. "I just really tried to do what I had done all week on that next swing and made a good swing and made a good putt. That gave me the belief that I just had to keep doing that all day and believe that there was enough good golf in me to get me in a position at the end to have a chance."

He finished at 11-under 273 and moved to No. 7 in the world, his first time in the top 10 in nearly three years.

Scott won by two shots over Sung Kang, who started eagle-double bogey and shot 69; Scott Brown, who played bogey-free on the back nine and birdied the 18th for a 68; and Kuchar, who had a 72.

Hideki Matsuyama made the cut on the number and finished three shots behind in a tie for fifth with McIlroy, Bryson DeChambeau, Max Homa and Joel Dahmen.

"I'm stoked with this," Scott said. "It's a big step, whatever point in my career I'm at. I haven't won for three years. This feels very special."

It showed at the end. He rapped in a 3-foot par putt, stood back and raised his right fist in the air. This victory was a long time coming, and it came on his favorite PGA Tour course. And this time, it counted.



## NEW YORK

(AP)—A plethora of NFL quarterbacks are set to hit the open market in the next few weeks in Tom Brady, Drew Brees, Dak Prescott, Philip Rivers, Teddy Bridgewater, Jameis Winston, Ryan Tannehill, Marcus Mariota and Case Keenum.

With at least nine in-demand signal-callers, the NFL could see a quarterback shake-up unparalleled in recent NFL history. According to NBC Sports' Mike Florio, there may be "more butts than seats."

"In this looming game of quarterback musical chairs, I still don't think we know whether when the music stops, there's gonna be more

## Free agency could be 'potential chaos' for available QBs

butts than seats, or more seats than butts," Florio said on NBC Sports' PFT Live. "And there's a chance that there's gonna be a team that is left because they wanted too long to have something lined up, they're gonna be left looking around saying 'Who the hell's our quarterback for 2020?'"

Based on that list of quarterbacks, teams that could have a QB vacancy to fill this winter include the Patriots, Cowboys, Saints, Buccaneers, Chargers and Titans. There are nine quarterbacks on that list, though Mariota and Keenum may be viewed more as backups by prospective suitors. Therefore, you could have six teams in need of a quarterback

and seven on the open market.

The former figure could increase if teams like the Bears or Raiders look to upgrade the quarterback position in free agency. In that case, perhaps there are more "chairs" than "butts" this offseason, meaning some teams may find themselves without a starting quarterback entering the NFL draft.

In that scenario, a team may be inclined to trade for a QB, such as Bengals' Andy Dalton. How this chaotic situation plays out will be determined in the coming weeks, but what's already certain is this offseason's free agency could be a frenzy.

"We've never had anything even close to this, by way of

potential chaos for quarterbacks in free agency and really through the draft," Florio said. "Who knows how it's all gonna play out? There's gonna be a major, major shakeup, potentially. It's gonna be somewhere between nothing changes and complete and total chaos, but I think it's gonna be closer to complete and total chaos."

Meanwhile, Arizona Cardinals general manager Steve Keim made it clear on Friday that running back David Johnson will not be cut.

That still doesn't seem to be the end of the story.

Johnson, who was once one of the NFL's most exciting players but virtually disap-

peared in the Cardinals offense last season, was rumored to be a cut possibility. That never made sense considering the vast amount of dead money it would cost on the salary cap.

Johnson is another example of large running back extensions not working out.

In 2016 he was amazing. Johnson had 2,116 yards from scrimmage and 20 touchdowns. That was his second season. He looked like a superstar. In September of 2018, Johnson signed a three-year, \$39 million extension that takes him through 2021.

Since Johnson's breakout season, injuries and ineffectiveness have held him back. In the three seasons since, he

has 2,191 yards and 16 touchdowns. Over his last six games last season he had 17 carries for 45 yards. Kenyan Drake took over lead back duties after a trade from the Dolphins. Drake is a free agent but after what happened late last season, you'd have to imagine the Cardinals would want him back.

It would be easier to re-sign Drake without Johnson taking up \$14.2 million in cap space. The Cardinals will likely try to trade Johnson, but that won't be easy. Teams won't take on Johnson's salary after the last three seasons. The Cardinals would have to take on a good amount of his salary in a trade, and at some point it doesn't become worth it to eat a large chunk of the salary but not have the player anymore.



# In midst of virus outbreak, no 'Plan B' for Olympics

**TOKYO (AP)**—Tokyo Olympic organizers and the International Olympic Committee said there is no "Plan B" for the 2020 Games, which open in just over five months and have been jolted by the outbreak of a virus in neighboring China.

The coronavirus has infected almost 64,000 people globally with almost 1,400 deaths in China, but only one in Japan where fear is rising with so much attention focused on the outbreak.

"Certainly the advice we're received externally from the WHO (World Health Organization) is that there's no case for any contingency plans or cancelling the games or moving the games," John Coates, the head of an IOC inspection team, said to wrap up a two-day visit that was dominated by the virus issue.

Coates and Tokyo Olympic organizers took 11 questions at a news conference on Friday. All 11 were about the virus, or the presence of Chinese athletes in 19 remaining test events in Japan, or about Chinese fans, or repeated questions seeking reassurance the games will go ahead as planned.

A Japanese reporter asked

Tokyo organizing committee President Yoshiro Mori if, given the fact the games are going ahead, would there be any "organizational changes" in how the games are run.

"No, at this stage, no. We are not thinking of any such possibility," said Mori, a former Japanese prime minister, speaking in Japanese.

Mori, Coates and CEO Toshio Muto looked glum sitting at a head table taking essentially the same question over and over.

"We can confirm that Tokyo 2020 remains on track," Coates said in his opening statement.

Coates was asked by a CNN reporter if he was 100% confident that the Tokyo Olympics would go on as scheduled and open on July 24.

"Yes," he replied.

Coates talked positively about keeping a close watch on Chinese athletes, and talked optimistically about their eventual presence in Tokyo, where they would probably field a team of 600 athletes—one of the largest delegations.

"We continue also to monitor, particularly the Chinese that will be coming here,"

Coates said. "You'll find that the Chinese teams are mostly out of China. That's the athletes and officials."

He didn't offer any specific numbers.

Others away from the Olympic circle are uncertain what course the virus outbreak will take.

"Frankly speaking, there is no guarantee that the outbreak will come to an end before the Olympics because we have no scientific basis to be able to say that," Shigeru Omi, a former regional director of the WHO and an infectious disease expert from Japan, said Thursday.

"So it is meaningless to predict a timing when it may come to an end," he added. "We should assume that the virus has already been spreading in Japan. People should understand that we cannot only rely on border controls to prevent the spread of the disease."

Dr. Mike Ryan, WHO chief of emergencies, said at a news conference Friday in Switzerland that WHO only offers technical advice and it's up to the IOC and organizers to make decisions re-

lated to the Olympics.

"We have not offered advice to the IOC for the Olympics one way or another," he said. "And neither would we. That's not the role of WHO to call off—or not call off—any event. It is the role of WHO to offer technical advice."

Mark Woolhouse, a professor of infectious disease epidemiology at the University of Edinburgh, told The Associated Press in an email: "I don't think anyone right now can confidently predict the state of affairs come late summer."

"One slight word of caution," he added. "Influenza is regarded as a winter infection in the northern hemisphere. But when we encountered a new strain in 2009-10 — pandemic strain, or swine flu—

we did see cases in the summer months."

That is not particularly good news, where many talk of the hot, humid Tokyo summer taking its toll on the virus.

The AP requested but was declined an interview with Dr. Richard Budgett, the IOC's medical and scientific director who was in Tokyo for the meetings.

The dynamic growth of the Olympics makes any schedule change difficult.

About 73% of the IOC's \$5.7 billion revenue in a four-year Olympic cycle comes from broadcasting rights from networks like NBC and NHK in Japan. Moving the Olympics back even two months would clash in North America with a full plate of sports broadcasts: NFL, NBA, baseball, and col-

lege football.

There is also the matter of millions of tickets sold, flights and hotels booked, and \$3 billion in local sponsorship sold in Japan with advertisers expecting some results for their expenditure.

A reporter for the Chinese news agency Xinhua asked if Jack Ma, the founder of Alibaba—a major Olympic sponsor—would be free to come to the Olympics despite the fact he is from one of the two provinces has been the most severely affected by the virus.

"Depends where he'll be holidaying before he comes here," Coates said, cracking one of the few jokes of the night. "Whoever it is has to comply with the rules of the Japanese (immigration) authorities."



## Lady Dolphins triumph in Rocball League opener

The Lady Dolphins topped the Sisterhood in the opening game in the Marianas High School Rocball Girls League last week at the MHS Gymnasium.

The Lady Dolphins and Sisterhood will be joined in the round-robin, three-game elimination by the Noobs, I'd Hit That, Setsy Ladies, Fam Bam, and Team Yessir.

In other results of last week's opening games, the Noobs juiced out Fam Bam in four sets. The Noobs scored 10

aces, five xunks, and three kees in their win over Fam Bam. Tarsila Balbin of the Noobs was the game's heavy hitter after making 18 points off four aces, two xunks, and

three kees.

Setsy Ladies also prevailed in their first game after defeating I'd Hit That in four sets. Players from the opposing teams are still adjusting to the game, as they looked like they were playing volleyball on a Rocball court. Only six aces and one kee were made in the match. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
A player in one of the teams competing in the Marianas High School Rocball Girls League receives a serve during last week's opening game at the MHS Gymnasium.

## SCHORR

From Page 28

6-0, Malika Miyawaki, 6-0, 6-0, and the No. 2 seed Woo, 6-4, 6-1. Woo, before losing to Bellama, made it to the semis following his 6-1, 6-1 victory against Jeff Race—a 6-2, 6-1 winner over Vincent Tudela in the lower half of the draw.

At the upper half of the men's singles field, Schorr eased past Ji Hwan Ryu, 6-0, 6-0, and No. 4 seed Ken Song, 6-0, 6-4, to march into the finals. Song moved into the semis after laboring through a 5-7, 6-0, 10-7 victory over Colin Ramsey, while Ryu advanced to the quarterfinals after booting out Steven Goodwin, 6-2, 6-4.

Meanwhile, David Kwon, Ian Chae, and Wataru Kadokura won their respective divisions in the boys juniors singles.

Kadokura stunned No. 1 seed June Yu in the boys U14 finals, 6-3, 6-0. Kadokura was seeded No. 2 in the six-player field and moved into the title match after ousting David Bachani, 6-4, 6-3. Bachani set up a semis duel against Kadokura following his 6-4, 6-2 win over Danny Jeoung.

Yu, on the other hand, made it to the finals after a 7-5, 6-1 victory over Cody Shimizu, who marched into the Final Four after eliminating Jaden Hwang, 6-0, 6-1.

In the boys U16 singles title game, the No. 2 Kwon defeated the unranked Isaac Heo, 7-5, 6-3. Kwon escaped with a 3-6, 6-3, 11-9 win over Jun-

cheol Hwang last Sunday to set a championship showdown against Heo, who pulled off an upset over No. 1 seed Andy Kim, 7-6, 6-1. Hwang also surprised Kim after taking a 5-7, 6-4, 10-6 win in their battle for third place.

In the boys U10 singles, Chae prevailed in the three-way tiebreak to secure the division championship.

Chae posted a 3-1 record in the round-robin competi-

tion and won the standoff after posting an 18-8 mark (games won/loss). Eamon Tang and Jihun Park also earned the same slates, but the former had an 18-14 record (games won/loss) and the latter registered 19-15 to drop to second and third place, respectively.

Meanwhile, results of other events in this year's White Coconut Classic will be reported in *Saipan Tribune's* Wednesday issue.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Wataru Kadokura hits a backhand return to June Yu during their boys U14 finals match in the 2020 White Coconut Tennis Classic yesterday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

## TANHOLDINGS

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14th and the second in the 41st.

Paul Lizama was the third player to notch twin goals in the Shirley's-Kanoa tiff with his conversion in the 14th minute tying the game for the first time. The match remained in a standoff until the halftime break, but an early goal in the second half (38th minute), courtesy of Rooney Gil, put Kanoa on top.

However, Kanoa could not keep the shaky lead, as Santos countered with his pair of goals, while the former got only one from Lizama, who posted the last shot in the close game in the 59th minute.

In the other match in the

division, TanHoldings banked on two goals in the first half to thwart MP United.

TanHoldings was given an own goal in the eighth minute, while Kaithlyn Chavez scored in the 27th minute for the team's 2-0 advantage at the end of the first 30 minutes of play.

Ian Song then broke MP United's silence with his goal right in the first minute of the second half, but that was not enough to spark the team's rally, as TanHoldings hung tough on defense to keep the precarious lead.

### BOYS U19 MP United 8, NMI U15 0

Before losing its season debut in the co-ed U13, MP United managed to enter the win

column in the opening of the boys U19 division competition last Friday.

MP United walloped the NMI Boys U15 National Team behind the hat trick of Oliver Lee, who lit up the board in the eighth, 69th, and 73rd minute. Skyler Poon added two goals, while John Michael Rojas, Joshua De Leon, and Kaden Church contributed one apiece.

### TanHoldings 1, Kanoa 1

In the other match in the division, TanHoldings forced a draw against Kanoa.

Kohtaro Goto hit the equalizer in the 65th minute, while Sebastien Manabat scored nine minutes earlier to hand Kanoa the slim lead.





Close win for  
Team LeBron  
against Team  
Giannis

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# Saipan Tribune Sports

Manfred: No  
tolerance for  
beanballs

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

# Schorr keeps singles crown

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Robbie Schorr defended his men's singles title in the 2020 White Coconut Tennis Classic, but not after working his way to victory against a former NCAA Division 1 player yesterday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.



Schorr, who clinched the 2019 crown in the same tournament after sweeping Jimin Woo, 6-3, 7-6, this time needed an extended game to make it back-to-back, as TJ Bellama proved to be a tougher opponent in their finals showdown.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Robbie Schorr, right, makes a baseline return to TJ Bellama, left, during their men's singles title game in the 2020 White Coconut Tennis Classic yesterday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Bellama, who used to play captain for the Arizona State University men's tennis team in the Pac-12, scored a 6-3 victory in the second set to deny

Schorr the sweep in the finale. Earlier in the first set, the No. 1 junior player in the CNMI raced to a 3-0 lead en route to a 6-3 triumph to move closer

to a successful title defense.

Then in the deciding super-tiebreaker third set, Schorr played steadier in the end to

pull off a 10-7 win and spoil Bellama's debut on Saipan soil.

The new Saipan resident was seeded No. 3 in the tourna-

ment and reached the finals after eliminating Sean Lee, 6-1,

**See SCHORR on Page 27**

## TanHoldings, Shirley's draw first blood

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

TanHoldings Football Club and Shirley's Football Club eked out close wins in their respective season debuts in the co-ed U13 division of the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

TanHoldings was paired against MP United Football and escaped with a 2-1 victory, while Shirley's pulled off a similar tough win versus Kanoa Football Club in the other matchup last weekend, 4-3.

Branson Jay Santos drilled back-to-back goals in the second half to give Shirley's



cushion. His shot in the 54th minute broke the second minute and deadlock in the match, 3-2, and he made another one a minute later to hand Shirley's the insurance. Bennetton Haro also delivered a pair for Shirley's with his first goal recorded in the

**See TANHOLDINGS on Page 27**



MARK RABAGO

An MP United Football Club player, left, dribbles away from TanHoldings Football Club's Kaithlyn Chavez during the first half of their co-ed U13 game in the opening of the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

## Real training and eating healthier

I just finished clearing a table of five when the assistant manager said, "We're short-handed today. Dishwasher called in sick."

As a busser at a casual burger joint, not only did I have to clear tables that day, I had to attend to the dishes as well. On the surface, I was relaxed. But with an hour away before the lunch rush, I was dripping with anxiety. Sure enough, once my shift ended I took a deep breath in. "Screw it. I'm done with this."

That was my last day in the restaurant biz. It was officially spring break, and after that mess I had every intention of not returning. Looking back, I should have been more professional. My misfortune perfectly illustrates what many of you do out of sheer frustration when you start to encounter turbulence trying to get in better shape.

Weather the storm.

**Q: You've opened up my eyes to what real training is. I've been going to the gym on my own for a year, and I got pretty decent re-**

**sults. But the progress I've made working with you has trumped that.**

**A:** Despite what's been proven time and time again, both through evidence and reliable anecdote, most women still have difficulty shifting away from circuit and aerobic based workouts. For some of you, you'll feel like you're behind the eight ball if you don't gas yourself out. You can certainly experience modest improvements if that's your wheelhouse. There's nothing wrong pulling on that thread particularly if you enjoy it and can do it over the long haul. After all, consistency is a big deal and you should

do whatever makes you feel like a badass. Still, it's worth repeating hours upon hours of cardio pales in comparison to strength training.

**Q: I'm not where I want to be, but seeing small changes is huge motivation. Planning to get more serious with the diet. It's taken a long time to get in the right headspace.**

**A:** That's awesome. Just so we're on the same page, remember you're not entirely out of the gate just because you eat clean wholesome meals. Yes—they may be healthier options, but you can still gain weight if you eat in excess. Portion control still applies.

**Ask DRE:**

By DRE DELOS SANTOS  
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Dre Delos Santos writes about fitness and nutrition for Saipan Tribune and TAGA Sports. He is a personal trainer at Gold's Gym. He is featured on fitness sites such as Weight Watchers, T-Nation, and STACK.

